

**FACTORS INFLUENCING WORK SATISFACTION OF SINGLE
PARENTS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY**

BY

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

Families have transitioned from the traditional profile of two married heterosexual parents to homosexual and single parents. There has been a documented increase in single-parent families over the years. Various causes, such as divorce, death, irresponsible fathers, choice, etc. contribute to this increase. Single parents are largely made up of women as compared to men. When translating it to the world of work, this rise means that more and more companies employ single parents and will continue to do so in the future. The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) is not excluded from these companies. Since 2005, the SANDF has been partaking in various peace-keeping missions on the continent. The deployment of the SANDF is however not limited to cross-border activities. The SANDF also deploys its soldiers within the country in border control operations. While some soldiers are deployed within and outside the borders of the country, there are others who remain in the home bases to continue with daily tasks. These soldiers normally work from 08:00–16:00, Monday to Friday. There are instances, however, where they need to work beyond the normal working hours and over weekends to participate in training exercises or even being deployed. Because of their single-parent status, these soldiers face inherent military challenges as well as role-related ones, which may influence their work satisfaction.

Literature purports that single parents experience challenges such as stress, a lack of social support, work–family conflict and work–family enrichment. These challenges directed the present study, which explored whether these challenges have an influence on the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF.

All the questionnaires utilised in this study were found to be reliable in an African military sample. Structural model analysis conducted through PLS 3 revealed that only three of the four documented challenges influenced single-parent work satisfaction. Stress did not have an influence while a lack of social support, work–family conflict and work–family enrichment influenced work satisfaction. Social support was found to have a moderating effect on work satisfaction while work–family conflict and work–family enrichment had a direct influence. These results led to recommendations which focus mainly on provision programmes by the SANDF which will offer increased enrichment and support and reduce the conflict between work and family demands for single-parent soldiers.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family, my parents Hamilton and Maria Matjeke; my siblings Dikeledi, Tempele, Mokete and Mohau Matjeke; and my niece Keaipela Matjeke.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

SANDF= South African National Defence Force

WFC= Work Family Conflict

WFE= Work Family Enrichment

US= United States

WW1= World War 1

SPSS= Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

PLS=Partial Least Squares

MOS-SS= Medical Outcomes Study Social Support Survey

SWWS= Satisfaction With Work Scale

WFC scale= Work Family Conflict scale

GAS= General Adaptation Syndrome

COR= Conservation of Resources

PTSD= Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

ART= Attention Restoration Theory

RRT= Relational Regulation Theory

FWC= Family to Work Conflict

MOS-SSS= Medical Outcomes Study Social Support Survey

WIF= Work Interference with Family

FIW= Family Interference with Work

SWLS= Satisfaction With Life Scale

SWWS= Satisfaction With Work Scale

DESC= Departmental Ethics Screening Committee

REC= Research Ethics Committee

HPCSA= Health Professions Council of South Africa

PLS= Partial Least Squares

SD= Standard Deviation

AVE= Average Variance Extracted

SEM=Structural Equation Modelling

MPT= Multi Professional Team

GOCs= General Officer Commanding's

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The military has been proved to be a key part of any country or state. The United States (US.) General George Washington shared this notion in the 17th century in his plea to the Senate and House of Representatives to create the US military officially. Washington wrote a letter and stated that he did not see a need to argue for an issue on which the honour, safety and wellbeing of the country essentially and evidently depended on (Library of Congress, n.d.).

The military is one organisation which speaks volumes. The military of a country deters friendly forces as well as potential enemies. A military force and its country reflect one another. From a spectator's view, the military demonstrates the commitment and priority that a country's people have as a whole. Equally, the standing and capability of a country demonstrates the ability of its military force through interactions with other countries, as a global competitor. A weak military force implies a weak country and vice versa. It should be noted that strength in this regard does not only refer to physical power but also to the ability of a military to compete with counterparts on different levels and even exceed their capabilities (Library of Congress, n.d.).

From the era of its establishment along with the status quo of the world before World War 1 (WW1), the military only recruited strong and fit men. The military was no place for 'weak' men or women. The military operated only on physical strength and did not place much emphasis on broadening its services to include the 'softer' side, which would refer to administration and health care. These services were considered to be unnecessary tasks that could be conducted by women. With the passing of time, what were referred to as 'female roles' were increasingly incorporated into the military, and hence conducted by men and women. The field, where a soldier would come face to face with his enemy and 'hard-core' combat took place, was still viewed as an unsuitable area for women. The participation of women in the military was only limited to forms of non-combat support, such as health care, telecommunications administrative work or serving as operators (Library of Congress, n.d.).

However, 6 April 1917 marked a fundamental shift in the composition of the US military that was to be replicated in militaries over the world although the change did not occur simultaneously. For the first time ever in history, during WW1, along with women who served in the regular Navy and Army as military nurses, women who did not occupy those roles were enlisted in the Navy and Marine Corps. By the end of the war, the direct participation of women in combat had been well established. By the offset of WWII, participation by women had been established so much that women were included without doubt or question. Thereafter the incorporation of women in the military as direct combatants was carried over from continent to continent. Today, women are found as permanent serving members of various defence forces across the world (Kamarck, 2015; Library of Congress, n.d.). Nowadays, most defence forces consist of both men and women.

Segal (1989), Vuga and Juvan (2013) and Cox (2016) refer to the military as a greedy institution. The military has always been an organisation which demanded rather than gave to those who enjoyed its employment. The military is further an organisation which dominates and places heavy expectations upon the lifestyle of military members and their families. The military expects to be prioritised while family and personal circumstances are made second priority in order to accommodate the goals, objectives and missions of the military. However, according to policy, the military does not only take from service members; it offers them economic and social support to compensate for the sacrifices they make. The military contributes financially when a member moves and offers support when a soldier is deployed or whenever they come across challenges that are inherent to or consequences of the job (Bowen & Neenan, 1989; Clever & Segal, 2013; Gerwitz, Pinna, Hanson & Brockberg, 2014; Hosek & Wadsworth, 2013).

As the saying goes, no man is an island. Soldiers who serve on a permanent basis do not only focus on their military careers; they also focus on being parents and spouses. The focus of this study was on regular force members, as the effects of military service on their livelihoods are more apparent than for reserve force members. Reserve force members have the luxury of deciding when to participate in operations and in which operations they want to participate. As expected by psychologists, soldiers respond to their physiological and psychological needs by

extending their roles to those of parent and spouse. These soldiers commit themselves to participate and perform in both their family life as well as work roles.

The participation of soldiers in operations, however, is unpredictable at best. A soldier might be enjoying family life one day and be flying outside the borders of the country the next. Upon joining the military as a young adult, a soldier understands and makes peace with the knowledge that prioritising the military is expected of him or her, and the soldier does not really struggle with fulfilling the expectation until he or she has to divide his or her time amongst work and family.

The SANDF is no exception to the standards of operation for military forces. The SANDF is continually involved in national and international operations throughout the year. Deployments may be understood as temporary movements of military personnel with an attempt to meet a mission or objectives (Ling & Johnson, 2013). The organisation previously deployed members outside the borders of South Africa for a period of six months or less. Currently, the SANDF has implemented a 12-month deployment period with a possible two weeks leave in between. This period is twice as long as it used to be and this means that soldiers and their families will spend 12 months apart from one another. Separation between soldiers and their families has been experienced to have a negative effect on the family as a whole (Lester & Flake, 2013; Paley, Lester & Mogil, 2013).

As mentioned previously, soldiers do not exist in isolation. They are part of families. The soldier and his or her family are referred to as a military family. According to Clever and Segal (2013, p.16), during the draft periods, military families were typically defined as “senior officers’ wives and children, who were expected to play a supporting role in their husbands’ or fathers’ careers”. The definition of a military family has however since gone through changes, and continues to change as more heterosexual females and more male and female homosexuals are recruited into the force. Military families have evolved from the previous ‘normal’ family of two parents – one male and the other female – to contemporary families, which reflect modern society.

In addition to the ‘normal’ family, the military currently also consists of single-parent families, dual-career families as well as same-sex parent families (Barajas, 2011; Bowen & Neenan, 1989; Bowen & Orthner, 2015). The authors further noted that the

change in families is not only found in the military. Such changes can also be seen in the civilian community (Minotte, 2011). A study conducted by the US Census Bureau (as cited by Bowen & Orthner, 2015) found that, although there are similarities between the civilian and the military communities in terms of the increasing number of single parents, the civilian community consisted of a majority of single female parents whilst six out of ten single parents in the US Air Force were male. These figures are expected to change as more women are recruited. For example, in 2011, female soldiers made up almost 26.6% of the SANDF compared to the previous all-boys forces. Out of 18.5 million children in South Africa, 12.4 million are raised in single-parent homes with the majority living with a mother (Seggie, 2015). Furthermore, the majority of single parents are African females. The SANDF does not have exact figures for single-parent soldiers of which it is aware, whether members have dependants or not. What makes this more difficult is that members often choose not to disclose that they are parents (C.C.C. Gulwa, personal communication, March 17, 2016).

The presence and increase of single parents is a result of various causes. Some individuals make the conscious choice to be single parents, while others become single parents by default when their partner rejects responsibility, dies or divorces them. The causes are similar for both male and female single parents. Divorce, however, has been noted as the single largest cause of single parenthood or single-parent households (Greese, Du P. Meyer & Schrek, 2012). Previously, high divorce rates in the military have been linked to the time uniform members spent away from their families as well as their inability to handle post-traumatic stress associated with deployments. The inability to handle post-traumatic stress may give rise to a soldier exhibiting negative behaviours towards loved ones, such as aggressive behaviour, disengagement, disassociation and/or substance abuse (Bartone, 2006).

Some countries refrain from recruiting single parents. In America, for example, military policy does not allow single parents to be recruited; however, parents who become single parents whilst already in the military are allowed to remain and serve. The SANDF does not have such a policy in place, and there is no recruitment discrimination in terms of parental status (C.C.C. Gulwa, personal communication, March 17, 2016). It is not clear at this point how many single parents are currently

serving in the SANDF. It was therefore the anticipation of the researcher that this study would make a contribution to that extent.

According to Hooper, Moore and Smith (2014), military families are confronted with most of the challenges faced by civilian families. Families deal with challenges such as work–family conflict, insufficient financial resources, dispersed family members as a result of employment responsibilities, and in most cases, families are too far from the extended family to benefit from their support.

Hooper et al. (2014) elaborate that, although the above-mentioned is true, military families also face unique challenges and stressors that are inherent to the military. Some of the generic challenges that military families come across are where they live, how long they stay in a particular area as well as the duration of separation between a soldier and his or her loved ones (Russo & Fallon, 2015).

Minotte (2012) reports that single parents have unique challenges. This will be explained shortly. It should be noted that these challenges are added to the generic ones that all military members experience, such as stress, long periods away from home, threat of death, instability and ambiguity. Single parents have been reported to face challenges such as difficulty in integrating work and family demands, a lack of adult support in parenting, and a lack of time to meet all the demands placed upon them. Such challenges influence one's wellbeing and satisfaction (Minotte, 2012). Furthermore, single parents mostly experience their relationship as one-sided and only beneficial towards the military (S.A. Gumede, personal communication, May 08, 2016).

As previously mentioned, the numbers of single parents in the armed forces have increased and are expected to keep rising with time. The majority of the literature on common single-parent challenges in the military reports that they face challenges such as stress, work–family conflict, a lack of social support as well as a lack of work–family enrichment (Minotte, 2012). The reported challenges indicate the influential relationship between soldiers and the military forces to which they belong. One can make an assumption that, due to the challenges they come across, single parents could be expected to be less committed and satisfied as compared to dual parents or soldiers who do not have any children.

These single parents lack a form of support from the military, which can potentially have a positive spill over into their families. Although the military is not a profit-based organisation, it requires output from its members. Said output is translated in the form of combat readiness (Shinga, 2015) and willingness to deploy (Nkewu, 2014). These two forms of output require a soldier to be committed to the force and, in order for his or her work to be meaningful and valuable, the soldier should experience a certain level of work satisfaction. Even though the military does not directly benefit from it as it is a subjective experience for the soldier, work satisfaction may also be viewed as a form of output that is expected from soldiers. A soldier who is satisfied with his or her work will possibly commit to the organisation and go above and beyond his or her expected contribution. The level of satisfaction that an individual derives from his/her work allows him/her to withstand even the most difficult circumstances and challenges. An individual who is satisfied with his or her work fully commits him- or herself physically, psychologically and mentally (Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2013).

Work satisfaction explains “the cognitive appraisal of a person’s work situation or a person’s well-being in the work context” (Bérubé, Donia, Gagné, Houlfort & Koestner, 2007, p. 273). Work satisfaction further explains the satisfaction that one experiences from your career as well as your wellbeing in the work environment. Seeing that soldiers face certain challenges that are linked to their work and that single-parent soldiers face even more challenges compared to their colleagues who have a partner with whom to share responsibilities, it is expected that experiencing reported challenges will influence the work satisfaction of single-parent soldiers.

Against the previously stated numerous common challenges that single parent soldiers come across, a research question was formulated regarding how interaction between these challenges would affect a soldier’s level of work satisfaction. Previous literature reports that individuals who have high levels of work satisfaction are productive and stay loyal to the company even through hard times (Organ & Greene, 1974). Considering the current demand placed on soldiers to form part of operations inside and outside the borders of South Africa as a result of increased unrest inside and outside the country, it will be beneficial for the force to deploy soldiers with high work satisfaction.

According to Russo and Fallon (2015), stress is determined by situations or life events that require adjustment. Van Dyk (1992) describes adjustment as the dynamic process by which a person, by means of mature, effective and healthy responses, strives to satisfy his or her internal needs and at the same time to cope successfully with the demands posed by the environment in order to achieve a harmonious relationship between the self and the environment. Different soldiers could thus experience the same event; however, their experience of stress would differ according to their subjective perceptions of the stressful event.

Previous research across different fields has documented a negative relationship between stress and work satisfaction (Beckers, Van der Linden, Smulders, Kompier, Taris & Geurts, 2008; Dougherty et al., 2009; Duffy & Lent, 2009; Giaque, Ritz, Varone & Anderfuhren-Biget, 2012 Hasson & Arnetz, 2006). The author could not find any documented studies regarding military-related stress and work satisfaction in the SANDF. The lack of work satisfaction studies for single parents is a potential managerial problem for the SANDF. If the SANDF does not understand the factors that influence the work satisfaction of single parents, it will not cater effectively for their needs and thus run the risk of losing committed and loyal soldiers. With the increasing demand for the SANDF to participate in external and internal deployments, it goes without saying that committed, loyal and combat-ready soldiers are key to its success.

Social support was identified by Baruch-Feldman, Brondolo, Ben-Dayan and Schwartz (2002) and Terry, Nielsen and Perchard (2011) as an important determinant of work outcomes. The authors identify a positive relationship between job satisfaction and social support, which means that when employees receive an acceptable level of social support they will be more satisfied with their job than when they receive little or no social support. To extend current literature to the present study, there is limited support for a positive or negative relationship between social support and work satisfaction in the SANDF for single parents. The author intends to make a contribution in this regard with the present study and to clarify the nature of this relationship.

Greenhaus and Beutell (as cited in Kossek & Ozeki, 1998) explain work–family conflict as conflicting role pressures between one’s work and one’s family, which are incompatible to the extent that participation in one role is made more difficult by

virtue of participation in the other. The majority of literature indicates a negative relationship between work–family conflict and job satisfaction (Britt & Dawson, 2005; Ford, Heineken & Langmaker, 2007; Judge, Ilies & Scott 2006). There are however no studies indicating a relationship between work–family conflict and work satisfaction for single parents in the SANDF. The present study will make a contribution in this regard.

Work–family enrichment is defined as “the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role” (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 73). Researchers have previously established a relationship between work–family enrichment and work outcomes (Michel & Clark, 2009). Chan et al. (2015) documented a positive relationship between work–family enrichment and job satisfaction. The author could not however find literature on the relationship between work–family enrichment and work satisfaction for single parents in the SANDF.

The majority of the existing studies, which investigated work outcomes, focused mainly on job satisfaction, which is only a part of work satisfaction (see par 2.3). There is a shortage of literature on work satisfaction in relation to stress, social support, work–family conflict as well as work–family enrichment. There are no studies, which investigated relationships between the aforementioned concepts and work satisfaction for single parents in the military. Furthermore, there seems to be an absence of literature on the abovementioned concepts and their relationship with the SANDF; more importantly, single parents in the SANDF. This absence of literature was identified by the author as a research gap where a contribution could be made towards supporting and understanding the challenges, circumstances and work satisfaction levels of single parents in the SANDF.

As previously mentioned, the SANDF does not have a recruitment policy which restricts the selection of single parents. As previously stated, the number of single parents in defence forces has been on the rise and is expected to increase further in the future. Being operational, the SANDF does not only require committed, willing and combat-ready soldiers; it also requires soldiers who are satisfied with their work and would choose to stay in the force if given an opportunity to leave. Considering the reported challenges that single parents confront on a continual basis, a need arises for an understanding of how these challenges influence their work satisfaction and whether they would choose to stay in the force if given an opportunity to resign.

Perhaps a determination of their work satisfaction would prompt a development of relevant and supportive policies and support structures. This then places a demand on the SANDF to accommodate and cater for the needs of single-parent members. In light of the abovementioned reasons, the intended study found its relevance.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

A notable implication in the relationship between the military and military families is that when a person joins the military, the entire family serves (Park, 2011). This is because whatever takes place between the military and a soldier, whether positive or negative, has a profound effect on the family. Having a demanding job, such as soldiering – and children, can be strenuous on a soldier (Creech, Hadley & Borsari, 2014; Gerwitz & Davis, 2014). A working parent is faced with dividing his or her resources between the work and family domains, managing stress experienced in the work environment, and preventing negative spillover into the family environment. Having a partner with whom to share responsibilities makes a difference and increases coping.

SANDF soldiers are expected to meet and function under unpredictable work circumstances and demands. Soldiers may be working in their respective units one day and be called to operate outside the unit and even outside the borders of the country the next. As stated previously, soldiers also play the roles of parents. According to SANDF policy, single-parent soldiers are not treated any differently when deployment allocations are conducted. Single-parent soldiers need to be available whenever their services are required regardless of their personal responsibilities.

Work satisfaction as a life domain plays a major role in the general wellbeing of individuals (Moreau & Mageau, 2012). When an individual is satisfied with his or her work, that person's wellbeing is expected to improve, which is ultimately expected to lead to higher commitment or performance. In addition to the challenges that SANDF single parents have been reported to come across, their roles and responsibilities are expected to influence their work satisfaction.

The documented increase of single parents in the country's employment sector, communities and ultimately in the SANDF, warrants a need for research into the challenges that they face on a daily bases and the effect these challenges have on

their work satisfaction. Although single parents face a number of challenges, such as a lack of support, conflicting demands, work overload and financial constraints, to mention a few, it seems most of these challenges originate from the single parent's participation in the employment sector (Hooper et al., 2014; Russo & Fallon, 2015).

Most challenges are an outcome of their participation in work, i.e. work–family conflict, work stress, a lack of work–family enrichment. Work seems to be the root of most challenges single parents encounter (Russo & Fallon, 2015). Paradoxically, single parents actually need work to function successfully. Work is a source of belonging and development for them. Work further equips single parents with financial resources which grant them the opportunity to elicit child care and household support or pay for counselling sessions, which may equip them with stress coping strategies. Financial resources gained as a result of work further allow single parents to develop new skills in the work environment, which may help them function better in the family environment and improve their work–family enrichment.

Most research in the work domain focuses mainly on job satisfaction and its components. Such research illustrates, for example, which factors influence a person's job satisfaction as well as how it is conceptualised. The majority of researchers have utilised job and work satisfaction interchangeably as meaning the same thing whereas the two concepts have been proved distinct from one another (Bérubé et al., 2007). A distinction between job and work satisfaction indicates that job satisfaction explains the responsibility one attaches to a particular employer whereas work satisfaction explains all work-related tasks in a person's life including his or her job (Bérubé et al., 2007). The researcher identified a gap that little or no research has been conducted investigating work satisfaction for single parents. Moreover, little or no research has been conducted, which investigated how the challenges that single-parent soldiers come across influence their work satisfaction (wellbeing in the work domain of their lives).

This study aimed to contribute and add to literature by providing an understanding in the research of work satisfaction for single parents in the SANDF. There is a gap in research and literature focusing on the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF. The study therefore aimed to enrich literature by providing an understanding of the work satisfaction of single-parent soldiers. The study further aimed to provide an understanding of the challenges that single-parent soldiers of the SANDF come

across while they are active force members and how those challenges affect their work satisfaction. In doing so, specific research questions were formulated:

- Is there a theoretical relationship between stress and work satisfaction?
- Is there a theoretical relationship between social support and work satisfaction?
- Is there a theoretical relationship between work–family conflict and work satisfaction?
- Is there a theoretical relationship between work–family enrichment and work satisfaction?
- Is there a theoretical relationship between work satisfaction and single parenthood?

Data was captured using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). STATISTICA 13, and partial least squares (PLS) with the software SMART PLS 3 was used to analyse the data. A 5% significance level ($p < 0.05$) was used as a guideline for determining significant relationships (Vinzi, Trinchera & Amato, 2010; M. Kidd, personal communication, July 15, 2016).

Descriptive statistics for the various factors and sample were calculated to provide an overview of the sample. Reliability analysis was calculated for each scale using Cronbach's alpha. Babbie and Mouton (2012) describe reliability as a matter of whether a particular method would yield similar results if applied repeatedly. Correlation analysis was conducted to test the relationships between variables (dependent and independent) as well as the hypotheses. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman correlation, which indicates a non-parametric value of the agreement between two variables (Hauke & Kossowski, 2011; Reberick, Lončarić, Petrović & Marić, 2015).

For the purpose of this study, the dependent variable was work satisfaction and the independent variables were stress, social support, work–family conflict and work–family enrichment. A researcher engages in the analysis of Cronbach's alpha to determine reliability of scales. Cronbach's alpha was found to be an accurate measure of reliability for scales consisting of as little as two items (Eisinga, Te Grotenhuis & Pelzer, 2012). This study investigated the work satisfaction of single

parents by testing the causal relationships between the dependent and independent variables.

Ensuing analysis, empirical results were used to guide the formulation of recommendations which encompass relevant intervention strategies for the SANDF to understand single parents properly and improve their work satisfaction.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between stress, work–family conflict, social support and work–family enrichment as factors that influence the work satisfaction of single parent soldiers in the SANDF.

1.3.1 Main objective

The main objective of this study was to conduct research and to investigate factors that influence the work satisfaction of single-parent soldiers in the SANDF empirically. Figure 1.1 illustrates the hypothesised relationship among variables. Scientific research methodology, i.e. exploratory research (Babbie & Mouton, 2012; Durrheim, 2006) was utilised to test the relationship between the dependent variable (work satisfaction) and the independent variables (stress, social support, work–family conflict and work–family enrichment).

1.3.2 Theoretical objectives

The theoretical objectives in this study were to conduct an in-depth literature study on the said variables of interest in order to determine the theoretical basis of their relationship to work satisfaction. The study was guided by the following theoretical objectives, namely to conceptualise:

- work satisfaction from a theoretical perspective;
- stress from a theoretical perspective;
- social support from a theoretical perspective;
- work–family conflict from a theoretical perspective;
- work–family enrichment from a theoretical perspective; and
- the theoretical relationships between stress, social support, work–family conflict, work–family enrichment and work satisfaction.

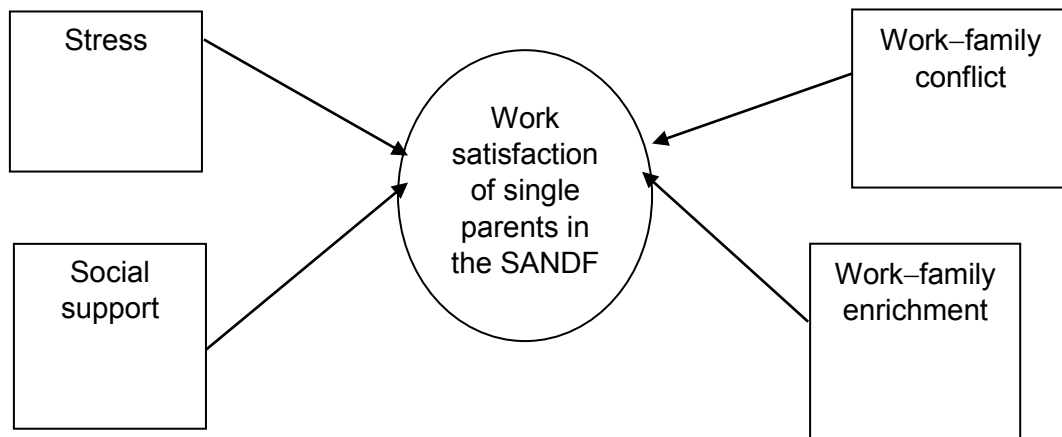


Figure 1.1. Conceptualised model of the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF

1.3.3 Empirical objectives

Empirical objectives were used in the form of exploratory research methodology in order to determine the relationships between the variables of interest (stress, social support, work–family conflict and work–family enrichment) and their effect on work satisfaction. The objective was to highlight the influence that the independent variables have on the dependent variable work satisfaction. The study was guided by the following specific empirical objectives, namely to determine:

- the level of stress in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- the level of social support in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- the level of work–family conflict in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- the level of work–family enrichment in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- the level of work satisfaction in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- the relationship between stress, social support, work–family conflict, work–family enrichment and work satisfaction in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- the level of stress between single and dual parents in the SANDF;
- the level of social support between single and dual parents in the SANDF;
- the level of WFC between single and dual parents in the SANDF;
- the level of WFE between single and dual parents in the SANDF; and
- the level of work satisfaction between single and dual parents in the SANDF.

1.4 RESEARCH PROCESS OVERVIEW

The research process is reported here in seven phases. Firstly the introduction to the study is reported here, secondly, the literature review, thirdly, the research design and methodology, fourthly, the presentation of results, fifthly, the discussion of those results, sixthly, the conclusion and lastly, limitations of the study will be presented as well as recommendations for future research.

1.4.1 Phase 1: Literature review

The aim of the literature review was to conduct an in-depth investigation of the factors involved in the work satisfaction of single parents by consulting previously conducted research. The literature review encompassed the use of critical and deductive thought patterns in an attempt to provide a clear understanding of the available literature on the identified factors for the study (i.e. stress, social support, work–family conflict, work–family enrichment and work satisfaction). Further, an analysis in terms of available theory is reported in order to determine the relationship between these factors and describe the possible influence of said independent variables on work satisfaction.

Specific areas of the study were:

- the concept of the military family;
- the concept of single parents;
- work satisfaction:
 - stress;
 - social support;
 - work–family conflict (WFC);
 - work–family enrichment (WFE); and
- conceptualising the relationship between mentioned constructs.

1.4.2 Phase 2: Empirical research

This study utilised standardised previous questionnaires to gather data for variables of interest. The selected questionnaires obtained acceptable Cronbach's alpha coefficients ($> .70$) (Babbie & Mouton, 2012). The questionnaires comprised paper-and-pencil evaluation tools administered to active members belonging to the Engineer Formation and were encoded in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) in order to conduct analysis of the responses. The questionnaires were

administered to a sample of 200 members of all rank groups. A short description of the questionnaires, which will be described further in Chapter three (see par 3.5) follows below.

The Perceived Stress Survey (PSS10) developed by Cohen, Kamarck and Mermelstein (1983) was used to measure stress. The survey consists of 10 items. Positively worded items are reverse-scored, and the ratings are summed, with high scores indicating high levels of perceived stress (Cohen et al., 1983). The survey has reported alpha and test–retest coefficients of .85 (Myers, 2004).

The Work–Family Conflict Scale (WFCS) is a self-report measure consisting of 18 items assessing six conceptually and empirically distinct dimensions (see par 3.5.3) (Carlson, Kacmar & Williams, 2000). The alpha coefficients for each of the six dimensions have been reported to exceed the conventional .70 level of acceptance (Lim, Morris & McMillan, 2010). The overall scale exceeds the .75 alpha coefficient (Lim et al., 2010).

The Medical Outcomes Study Social Support Survey (MOS-SSS) (Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991) was used to measure social support for single parents. This is a self-report measure that consists of 20 items. The survey has an overall reliability of above .90 (Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991).

The Work–Family Enrichment Scale (WFES) is a self-report measure, which consists of 18 items and six dimensions (see par 3.5.4) (Carlson et al., 2006). The internal consistency of each of the six dimensions is estimated using alpha coefficients. The reliabilities for its dimensions exceed the conventional level of acceptance of .70 and the full scale = .92 (Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne & Grzywacz, 2006).

The Satisfaction With Work Scale (SWWS) consists of five items (Bérubé et al., 2007). The scale was adapted from the satisfaction with life scale (SWLS). During validation, its test–retest reliability was .75 (Bérubé et al., 2007).

1.4.3 Phase 3: Reporting the results

Results of the analysis are presented in this section. The results are presented by means of descriptive statistics (i.e. mean, minimum, maximum and standard deviations [SDs]). In addition, the results of various statistical analyses (see par 1.2) reported in Chapter 3 of the thesis will be presented in detail. The different statistics will be further discussed in Chapter 3 and the results in Chapter 4.

1.4.4 Phase 4: Discussion of results

The results of the empirical research are discussed in this section. The discussion incorporates literature provided in Chapter 2. This incorporation will highlight similarities or differences between available literature and the present study.

1.4.5 Phase 5: Conclusion

Phase five will consist of conclusions for the study.

1.4.6 Phase 6: Limitations

This section will focus mainly on the measuring instruments as well as general limitations of the study, which became apparent during data analysis.

1.4.7 Phase 7: Recommendations

This section will focus on recommendations for future research on the topic. It will also highlight further use of results and propose intervention strategies to remedy the reported challenges.

1.5 CHAPTER DIVISION

The chapters will follow this order:

- a. Chapter 1: Introduction to the study
- b. Chapter 2: Literature review
- c. Chapter 3: Research design and methodology
- d. Chapter 4: Results
- e. Chapter 5: Discussion of results
- f. Chapter 6: Conclusion, limitations and recommendations

1.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of the transition of military families. It further highlighted that a majority of current and future military families comprise and will comprise single parents. Single parents face inherent challenges that are common to every member of the active force. They further experience challenges that are specific to them as single parents. Literature reports that single parents often struggle with challenges such as stress, lack of social support, high levels of WFC and a lack of WFE, which deduct from their satisfaction or wellbeing in the work domain of their lives.

Work is an important domain of adult life. Although work has been reported as a source of the challenges that single parents come across, it is also a source of resources, which may enable single parents to manage their challenges. Work satisfaction does not only focus on satisfaction with a particular job; it focuses on the general wellbeing that an individual experiences in relation to work-related activities. Assessing factors that influence the work satisfaction of single parents will equip the SANDF with the knowledge to handle, support and care for a large number of their workforce as single parents are reported to be on the rise in defence forces. Caring for single parents will ensure that the SANDF is armed with committed, satisfied and combat-ready soldiers who are ready to be deployed anywhere at any time without fear or doubt of who will care for their children in their absence. The chapter proposes that the challenges that single parents come across could affect their work satisfaction negatively. The chapter outlined the theoretical and empirical objectives of the study as well as the proposed model of work satisfaction. The chapter ended with a provision of the research process overview and chapter division.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive in-depth theoretical discussion of the factors that influence work satisfaction. The purpose of this study was to explore factors that influence the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF. In order to meet its objective, the chapter begins with a review of literature on single-parent families in the civilian and military environments with the aim of highlighting challenges that they often come across. The chapter further provides an in-depth literature review of work satisfaction and the factors that could possibly influence it (i.e. stress, social support, WFC and WFE). The chapter ends with an overview of the theoretical interaction between constructs.

2.2 SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES

The dynamic systems theory developed by Scanzoni, Polonko, Teachman and Thompson (1989) proposes an alternative way for examining the family. Families were previously examined by the family systems theory which focuses on the relationships that exist between family members and the social forces around them as well as the interconnectedness of their lives (White & Klein, 2002). The dynamic systems theory proposes that families should be examined by the existing system of relationships which “subsumes any and all varieties of living arrangements, household patterns, legal and residential structures, and so on, as well as the ongoing decision-making processes that occur within these patterns and arrangements” (Scanzoni et al., 1989, p. 52). The theory further emphasises the primary network available to an individual, which may include people who are not related biologically or by marriage but who are responsible for the person’s wellbeing.

According to Richards and Schmiede (1993), the dynamic systems theory should be applied when one aims to achieve a deeper understanding of the single-parent family. The rationale behind this notion is that the theory operates under the assumption that families are constantly changing rather than aiming for equilibrium. The theory further assumes that people create institutions or systems that are functional for them. Single parents and their children create their institutions or

systems (i.e. single-parent families) and adjust their functioning as a response to demands over time. The close relationships formed by single-parent families are with members who are available to them who may or may not be related to them. The mobile nature of the military and locations of various units in the SANDF force single parents to form close relationships with those around them. These relationships become useful when a single-parent soldier is on duty, course or deployment.

The importance of an adult with the capability to care for children has been highlighted by Seggie (2015). In her report which addressed the need for children to be cherished, the author mentions that many of the children in South Africa are not raised within nuclear families. Out of 18.5 million children, only 14.6 million have both living parents, which means that almost 4 million children in South Africa are orphans and may possibly be under the care of their grandparents. Not all the children who know both their parents live with both of them. Out of 18.5 million children, 12.4 million are raised in single-parent homes with the majority living with a mother, a quarter living with a father and the remaining unfortunately living with neither the mother nor father (Seggie, 2015).

As one can deduce from the above paragraph, family patterns have gone through transition from the previously widely accepted traditional family to the various current contemporary (non-traditional) family patterns. The traditional family is characterised by Macklin (2013, p. 905) as a “legal, lifelong, sexually exclusive marriage between one man and one woman, with children, where the male is the primary provider and ultimate authority”. Table 2.1 below provides a comparison of the characteristics of a traditional and a non-traditional family.

Table 2.1***Variant family forms in contemporary United States***

Traditional family	Non-traditional family
Legally married	Never married, singlehood, non-married cohabitation
With children	Voluntary childlessness
Two-parents	Single-parent (never-married; once married); joint custody and the binuclear family; the step family
Permanent	Renewable contract; divorce and remarriage
Male as primary provider and ultimate authority	Androgynous marriage (open-marriage; dual-career marriage, commuter marriage)
Sexually exclusive	Extramarital relationships (e.g. sexually open marriage, swinging)
Heterosexual	Same-sex intimate relationships
Two-adult household	Multi-adult households (e.g. multilateral marriage, communal living, home sharing; the affiliated family)

(Macklin, 2013, p. 318)

For the purpose of this study, the focus was on the single-parent family only. Gladding (1998, p. 282) defines a single-parent family as “a type of family form that includes families created as a result of divorce, death, abandonment, unwed pregnancy and adoption”. Single parenting has been described as a situation whereby a mother or father raises his or her children in the absence of a spouse (Keller, Ford & Meacham as cited in Amoakohene, 2013). Kinnear (1999) notes that single parent families are on the rise in the US as well as other parts of the world. Single-parent families are commonly made up of a mother or father and a child or children, with the majority of them consisting of a mother rather than a father. To bring this closer to home, it was observed that the typical child in South Africa is raised in a single-parent family by its mother (Holborn & Eddy, 2011).

There is however an additional parent to single-parent families, i.e. the replacement parent, which is the grandparent, more specifically the grandmother (Harper & Ruicheva, 2010). With changes in the mortality–fertility rates across the world, life expectancy rates have either increased or decreased along with intergenerational extension (an increase in the number of living generations) leading to an increased number of living grandparents. Because of the change in the aforementioned rates, grandparents are able to step in as primary caregivers and raise their grandchildren should the need arise.

Single-parent families diverge from the accepted 'norm' of two-parent families. An accepted concept of a family consists of a mother, father and a child or children. In defining a family, the following characteristics are societally expected to be present: a nuclear family comprising a man, woman and a child or children, which acts as a building block of society, characterised by a clear division of roles between the two parents, where children are socialised according to the ways of society versus 'unusual' families consisting of only a mother and a child or children or a father and a child or children, which are not accepted. The negativity towards these unconventional families continues to exist in some parts of the world, and Roman (as cited in Ochala & Mungai, 2015) highlights that married mothers are viewed as ideal whereas single mothers are regarded as a deviation from the norm. In certain areas, single-parent families are frowned upon to the point where they have been negatively coined the "non-intact family" (Maurya, Parasar & Sharma, 2015, p. 1235).

The definition of family has since gone through a transformation (Tyano, Keren, Herrman & Cox, 2010). Families are no longer defined by the combination of a mother, father and children. Furthermore, single-parent families are becoming more common and acceptable and are rapidly detaching from the stigma they once carried (Parenting South Australia, n.d.).

The current definition of a family translates to either a mother, father and children or a mother and children or a father and children and may even translate to grandparent(s) and grandchildren. In line with the transition of families, the Vanier Institute (as cited in McNulty, 2013, p. 6) defines family in a more inclusive manner as:

Any combination of two or more persons who are bound together over time by ties of mutual consent, birth and/or adoption or placement and who, together, assume responsibilities for variant combinations [including]: physical maintenance and care of group members; addition of new members through procreation or adoption; socialization of children; social control of members; production, consumption, distribution of goods and services; affective nurturance – love

With the transition of families in mind, the focus is on the single-parent family due to its relevance to this study. Numerous definitions have been suggested for single-

parent families over the years. A point to note is that the crux of the definitions has remained the same throughout the years. Orthner, Brown, and Ferguson (1976, p. 429) define a single-parent family as a “family which consists of one parent and dependent children living under the same roof”. Greenberg (2002, p. 329) revised the previous definition and defines single-parent families as “families in which the either the father or mother is absent because of divorce, marital separation, out-of-wedlock pregnancy or death”. For the purpose of this study, Greenberg’s (2002) definition of single-parent families was adopted.

2.2.1 Causes of single parenthood

The presence and ultimate rise of single parents across the world cannot be attributed to only one reason. A number of causes lead to men and women raising their children as single parents. Single parenthood can be either a choice or the result of circumstances. It appears that men and women become single parents because of the following reasons (Amoakohene, 2013; Kinnear, 1999; Lazarus, 2002; Maurya et al., 2015; Orthner et al., 1976; I.P. Whitaker, Whitaker, & Jackson, 2014):

- Conscious choice

Single men and women make a conscious choice to have children and then raise them on their own. The choice for women becoming single parents is driven by three factors: financial independence, a decrease in men’s earning power compared to that of women, and a decrease in the stigma that was previously associated with having a child or children out of wedlock. Men and women now make a conscious decision to be single parents because they have decided that they do not need a spouse to raise a child or have been unsuccessful in finding a suitable spouse. Single men and women can make a decision to be a legal guardian or adopt. Further, women can become pregnant through the use of artificial insemination rather than natural intercourse.

- Unplanned pregnancy

More women than men become single parents as a result of unplanned pregnancies. Unplanned pregnancy affects women of all ages. Unplanned pregnancy does, however, occur more in teenage women than in mature working women. In the past, women were expected to give their child away for adoption or get married to the

father. With the financial freedom gained through the years, women are now able to keep their children and raise them as single parents. Women do not always accept a child born through an unplanned pregnancy. Some women make a decision to hand over the responsibility of raising an unplanned child to the father. For example, a woman can give birth and leave her baby on the father's doorstep or pretend to visit the father and leave without taking the baby with her. This then leads to men becoming single parents through unplanned pregnancy.

Literature on single parents does not recognise death as the cause of a high number of women who raise children on their own without the father. Literature rather speaks of the phenomena of the absent but living father. This phenomenon involves a man who is not interested in participating towards raising his child or children. In most instances, the man has a number of children with multiple women and does not play a role in their upbringing. The absent but living father may or may not ultimately find a new woman with whom to have children and build a family. This behaviour has a negative effect on children in that they may have psychological problems (Whitehead, 1997), which adds to the challenges with which the single mother is confronted.

- Divorce

Divorce rates have been on the rise throughout the years (Whitehead, 1997). This increasing rate of divorces has led to a high number of single-parent families. Single-parent families are not selective of gender, i.e. both men and women could equally find themselves raising their children alone following a divorce. The increasing number of divorce cases may be caused by a number of factors, such as a decrease in the availability of jobs for men (whereby a man does not fulfil his primal role as a provider), women leaving bad marriages as a result of financial independence and a change in the societal perception of divorce. In the past, divorced women were labelled failures, unlike in the present times, where women are encouraged to leave abusive, unhappy or bad marriages and look for happiness elsewhere.

A less common but realistic outcome of divorce occurs when the male parent is given custody of his children (Collings, Jenkin, Carter & Signal, 2014; Nelsen, Erwin & Delzer, 2012). Some of the common factors which can contribute to fathers being

given custody of their children are (Collings, Jenkin, Carter & Signal, 2014; Nelsen, Erwin & Delzer, 2012):

- the father being a better parent than the mother;
 - the father can offer better security for the children;
 - the mother choosing her career over child rearing;
 - the mother could not care for the children;
 - mutual agreement between the parents;
 - the children choose to live with their father; or
 - the children (especially boys) need a male role model more than a female one.
- Death of a spouse

Death of a spouse has also been found to be one of the causes of single parenthood for both males and females. In the past, women became single parents when their partners died in work-related circumstances, e.g. participating in a war. Men, on the other hand, became single parents when their partners died during childbirth.

No one is immune from the causes of single parenting and, as seen above, the phenomenon occurs as a result of various causes. Based on these causes, the single-parent phenomenon is a reality and will continue to be a challenge for organisations if not handled well. Single parents are part of the organisational culture of the SANDF, which needs to be in a position to react positively to them and offer these parents adequate support which will possibly lead to increased work satisfaction.

2.2.2 Military families

Military families are no longer as traditional as they were in the past. According to Clever and Segal (2013, p.16), during the draft periods, military families were typically defined as “senior officers’ wives and children, who were expected to play a supporting role in their husbands’ or fathers’ careers”. The definition of a military family has, however, since gone through changes and continues to change as more heterosexual females and more male and female homosexuals are recruited into the force.

It is of importance to note that military families have evolved from the previous 'normal' family of two parents, i.e. one male and the other female. The military currently consists of single-parent families, dual-career families as well as same-sex parent families (Barajas, 2011; Bowen & Orthner, 1989, 2015). Literature indicates that the change in families is not only found in the military; these changes are also seen in the civilian community (Minotte, 2011). Such changes in family forms are expected to have an influence on child upbringing. In her work, Kinnear (1999) reports that an estimated 25–70% of children in the US are likely to live with a single parent before reaching the age of 18 years. Such an observation highlights the increased demand and responsibility placed on single parents.

A study conducted by the US Census Bureau (as cited by Bowen & Orthner, 2015) indicates that although there are similarities between the civilian community and the military in terms of the increasing number of single parents, the civilian community consists of a majority of single female parents whilst six out of ten single parents in the US Air Force are male. These figures are expected to change as more women are recruited. For example, in 2011, female soldiers made up almost 26, 6% of the SANDF compared to the previous all-boys forces. One can expect an increase in the number of female single parents as more females are recruited in the SANDF.

For military families, home is wherever they hang their hat or store their combat boots, and this place changes frequently (Ling & Johnson, 2013). According to Hooper, Moore and Smith (2014), military families are confronted with most of the challenges faced by civilian families. The authors elaborate that although the above-mentioned is true, military families also face unique challenges and stressors (see par 1.1) that are inherent in the military. Some of the inherent challenges that military families come across are where they live, how long they will stay in a particular area as well as the time a service member physically spends with his or her family (Russo & Fallon, 2015). The challenges that military families come across are closely related to the factors that influence work satisfaction in literature. These challenges cause a lack of stability and secure support environment for families regardless of whether they are single- or dual-parent families. It should be noted however that the influence of inherent military challenges is aggravated for single parents because they are especially in need of stability and supportive social networks. The inherent military

challenges will thus have a severe influence on the work satisfaction of single parents.

2.2.3 The challenges of single parents

In an attempt to develop an electronic support structure (peer-to-peer exchange system) that could be beneficial for single parents in establishing and maintaining a support network, Lampien, Huotari and Cheshire (2015) had an opportunity to hear the perspectives of single parents. Below is the perspective of a single parent in the sample (Lampien et al., 2015, p. 21):

There's some challenges about being a single parent single parents get that other people don't. I think anyone who has kids has really gotten that before they had kids, you don't understand what it's like to have kids. To take it a step further, people that have kids that are not single don't understand what it's like to be a single parent.

- Challenges that single parents come across are as different as the single-parent families themselves. With that said, there are challenges that single parents have in common. Amongst the varied challenges, researchers have studied topics such as economic problems;
- social-emotional problems and how these affect their lives;
- characteristics of individuals raised in single-parent homes (such as poor academic performance for teenagers);
- the interactional and structural characteristics of single-parent families, such as the extent to which single-parent families choose to interact with dual-parent families (Macklin, 2013).

Mdletshe and Louw (2012) add to the notion that there are various challenges that single parents come across. The authors report that life is difficult for hundreds of thousands of single parents in South Africa, more so for single mothers. Single mothers face challenges such as absent fathers, a lack of employment and unforgiving families. Some of the single mothers find themselves in situations where they need to take legal action in order to receive child maintenance. Some of the single mothers however do not request maintenance money from the father but rather choose to raise the child independently or with the assistance of family members. These challenges are not general because if these single mothers get

jobs, acceptance and support from their families, they will be able to raise their children in healthy and supportive environments.

Single-parent challenges seem to vary at individual, national and international level. Single parents who have migrated to other countries face common as well as unique challenges. At national level, single parents struggle with challenges such as employment, income, social participation, health and access to health services and housing. Challenges at international level include individual experiences as refugees, insufficient knowledge of foreign country support structures as well as cultural beliefs and practices (Ochala & Mungai, 2015).

As previously mentioned, the number of single parents has been on the rise globally. This global increase has spread into various employment sectors. Amongst the various sectors, one finds the military. Some countries have taken an active approach towards the inclusion of single parents in the military. In America, for example, military policy does not allow single parents to be recruited to certain departments; however, parents who become single parents whilst already in the military are allowed to remain in the force and serve (Powers, 2014).

In the US, active-duty single parents are allowed to serve on condition that they make childcare arrangements and are available whenever their services are required, failing which they may have their contracts terminated. In 2013, the US Air force implemented a new policy that allows the recruitment and enlistment of single parents and pregnant women. Even with such a positive policy change, there are still restrictions inherent to recruitment. Single parents wishing to apply for officer training may not have more than three children. Recruits, on the other hand, will only be enlisted if they have two children or fewer under the age of 18. Furthermore, recruits must be able to provide an approved child care plan (Joyner, 2013).

The SANDF however does not have an exclusion policy in place, which means there is no recruitment discrimination in terms of parent status (C.C.C. Gulwa, personal communication, March 17, 2016). With that said, it is contradictory that single parents are viewed as the biggest burden that the military bears as a result of childcare restrictions and demands placed on the parent (Mkhwanazi, 2016). The probability of a single parent serving as a uniformed member in the SANDF is the same as for all applicants regardless of parental status. It is not clear at this point

how many single parents are currently serving in the SANDF. This study might therefore make a contribution to that extent by indicating how many single parents can be found in the Engineering Corps of the South African Army.

Minotte (2012) reports that single parents have unique challenges, which are added to the generic ones that all military members experience. Single parents have been reported to face challenges such as difficulty in integrating work and family demands, a lack of adult support in parenting, and a lack of time to meet all the demands placed upon them. One could therefore make the assumption that, due to the challenges they come across, single parents can be expected to be less committed and satisfied compared to dual parents or soldiers who do not have any children.

Single parents need to be able to overcome and function above and beyond their challenges. Much of the literature on common single-parent challenges in the military reports that single parents face challenges such as military stressors (see Table 2.3), WFC, lack of social support as well as a lack of WFE (Minotte, 2012). The reported challenges indicate the influential relationship between soldiers and the military forces to which they belong. Even though the military is not a profit-based organisation, it requires output from its members. This output is seen in the form of combat readiness (Shinga, 2015) and willingness to deploy (Nkewu, 2014). The two forms of output require a soldier to be committed to the force and in order for his or her work to be meaningful and valuable to him or her, the soldier should experience a certain level of work satisfaction.

Though largely negative, the single-parenting phenomenon has some level of positivity within it. It offers parents and children an opportunity to grow and to provide a sense of closeness for family members and it fosters to an extent, independence for both children and parents. Leman (2015) emphasises this notion through his identification of six keys that make single parenting work. The Leman keys are:

- creating a plan;
- knowing yourself and your child;
- gathering a team;
- focusing on the ABC's (i.e. acceptance, belonging and competence);
- knowing what to say and do when kids ask; and
- realising it is not about the parent but about the kids for now.

Organisations contribute to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of their employees. As a measure of increasing employee satisfaction, organisations could implement support systems that are independent of employees' salaries. Such systems indicate to the employees that organisations understand the interrelationships between work and families. Some of the systems that may be implemented are changing work-life values, corporate day-care involvement, employee assistance programmes, flexitime, changing work place and space as well as implementing alternative career path models (Butts, Casper & Yang, 2013; Sullivan, 1984).

The level of satisfaction that individuals derive from their work allows them to withstand even the most difficult circumstances and challenges. Individuals who are satisfied with their work fully commit themselves physically, psychologically and mentally. Against the previously stated numerous common challenges that single parent soldiers come across, the question arose about how interaction between these challenges would affect a soldier's level of work satisfaction. Previous literature reports that individuals who have high levels of work satisfaction are productive and stay loyal to the company even through hard times (Organ & Greene, 1974)

Employees who lack satisfaction in their work leads to a reduction in productivity and loyalty. According to Gregory and Connolly (2008), individuals who are satisfied work harder and carry out their duties with more focus compared to unsatisfied employees. Furthermore, satisfied employees tend to remain in the organisation as satisfaction levels are influenced by their intention to quit. Work satisfaction speaks of employee commitment and loyalty towards their organisation. In the instance that employees are not satisfied with their work, there is a likelihood that they will seek satisfaction elsewhere. The seeking of satisfaction outside the organisation will most likely be at its expense. The organisation may lose its high-performing employees and/or face counterproductive behaviours from its employees (Organ & Greene, 1974).

Little has been reported on the relationship between work satisfaction and single parenting. Based on single-parenting literature, which largely highlights challenges rather than benefits, one can assume that there would be a negative relationship between single parenting and work satisfaction. The nature of single parenting seems to make it challenging or even complicated for one to be satisfied with your

work due to the constant interference and negative spillover between work and family needs.

2.3 WORK SATISFACTION

People spend more than half of their lifetime at work. This has however changed with the introduction of flexitime and the working from home model. There are however still sectors of employment where working from home is not possible. An example of such a sector is the military. With the amount of time that military employees spend at work, it is understandable that work will have an effect on their wellbeing. It is thus paramount for organisations to increase rather than inhibit employee wellbeing. One of the ways in which work can make a contribution towards employee wellbeing is through work satisfaction. Reilly (as cited in Parvin & Kabir, 2011) describes work satisfaction as the feelings that an employee has about his or her job as influenced by his or her perception of the job itself. Locke (1976), on the other hand, describes work satisfaction as a function of the perceived relationship between what a person wants from his or her job against what he or she perceives it is offering.

Organisational researchers have widely studied work satisfaction as a concept. Multiple definitions of work satisfaction have resulted from the research. Hong, Tan and Bujang (2010) are of the opinion that work satisfaction should be defined according to the context within which it is evaluated. Contrary to their belief, various authors define work satisfaction according to the relationship between an individual and his or her work environment regardless of the type of environment. Mottaz (1985, p. 366) defines work satisfaction as “a positive orientation toward work based upon a congruency between the worker’s perception of the work situation (along a variety of work dimensions) and his/her work values regarding those same values”. Price (as cited in Saleh, Darawad & Al-Hussami, 2014, p. 31) defines work satisfaction as “the employee’s affective orientation regarding his or her work”.

Locke (as cited in Van de Voorde, Van Veldhoven & Paauwe, 2014, p. 297) further defines work satisfaction as “a pleasurable state or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experience”. Lent and Spector (as cited in Duffy & Lent, 2009, p. 212) conceptualise work satisfaction in the same way and defined it as “the extent to which people like or dislike their jobs, including the work conditions

within which their jobs are embedded”. For the purpose of this study, the definition of work satisfaction by Bérubé et al. (2007, p. 273) was accepted, namely work satisfaction is “the cognitive appraisal of a person’s work situation or a person’s well-being in the work context”. Bérubé et al. (2007) explicitly state that work satisfaction is the same across various work contexts and needs not be defined according to a particular work context.

Hoppock (as cited in Shragay & Tziner, 2011) describes work satisfaction as a combination of the psychological, circumstantial, physical and environmental factors which cause people to say “I am satisfied with my work”. This conceptualisation of work satisfaction purports that although individuals may not be satisfied with particular aspects of their work, they are still able to achieve a balance between dissatisfaction and satisfaction which leads to an overall feeling of work satisfaction. Shragay and Tziner (2011) are of the opinion that work satisfaction can be affected by four factors, i.e. personality (the way a person thinks, behaves and feels); extrinsic and intrinsic values (which are linked to rewards and how a person should behave); the work conditions (the environment and people with whom one engages); and social factors (the influence of groups or individuals, which has an effect how a person behaves). As single parents rely largely on support systems in their environment, it can be expected that their work satisfaction might be negatively affected by the aforementioned factors. Personality factors, hardiness in particular, can be expected to play a key role in empowering a single parent to handle all the work–life-related challenges.

Work satisfaction has been researched and found to be one of the determining factors of motivation for individuals and organisations (Wagner & French, 2010). Furthermore, work satisfaction has been reported to have the highest positive effect on individual performance (Pundt, Wöhrmann, Deller & Shultz, 2014). In addition to the aforementioned, a significant relationship was found between work satisfaction and work environmental factors such as procedural and supervisor support (Gillet, Colombat, Michinov, Pronost & Fouquereau, 2013). An interpretation of this literature indicates that high levels of work satisfaction have positive outcomes for both the individual and the organisation.

Person–environment fit proves to be a determining factor for work satisfaction. Narimawati (2007) found that the perception individuals hold towards their fit with the

organisation plays a significant role in their work satisfaction, motivation as well as their effectiveness in the organisation. A single-parent soldier who feels that he or she belongs to the SANDF, is likely to experience high levels of motivation and work satisfaction and will be effective in the organisation.

Work satisfaction has additionally been explained in terms of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards and perceived work characteristics, which explain work rewards and work values, which further explain the importance that individuals attach to their perceived work characteristics. Zhou, Plaisent, Zheng and Bernard (2014) explain or conceptualise work satisfaction in terms of overall satisfaction and specific satisfaction. Overall satisfaction represents an employee's overall attitude towards work or love for work, whilst specific satisfaction reflects an employee's feelings in concrete aspects of the work.

2.3.1 Theories of work satisfaction

Lent and Brown (2006) and Lent, Brown and Hackett (1994) conceptualise work satisfaction through the social-cognitive theory. This perspective unifies subjective and psychological wellbeing through which cognitive, social, behavioural and affective variables are determinants of global life and domain-specific satisfaction (Foley & Lytle, 2015). Their model aims to integrate situational and dispositional approaches to the study of wellbeing. Furthermore, Lent and Brown's (2006) model provides unique features of work satisfaction. This work satisfaction model consists of the following key elements: work–educational satisfaction, goals and goal-directed behaviour, work conditions and outcomes, goal-relevant environmental supports, personality and affective traits, self-efficacy, goal-relevant environmental supports, resources and obstacles. Each of the key elements is briefly discussed below (Lent & Brown, 2006):

- Work–educational satisfaction

Work satisfaction is assessed through overall feelings about an individual's job or his or her feelings about certain job aspects, e.g. the work itself or rewards. The social-cognitive perspective demands adherence to theory-consistent guidelines, which dictate that predictors must be tailored to dependent variables along significant dimensions, such as time frame or content.

- Goals and goal-directed behaviour

The relationship between goals and satisfaction depends on the extent to which an individual focuses and progresses towards reaching them. Goal-directed behaviour allows an individual to activate personal agency towards life and domain-specific satisfaction. The promotion of work satisfaction depends on the extent to which individuals can set goals, pursue them, and pursue efforts that are effective in obtaining their goals.

- Work conditions and outcomes

Certain work conditions, such as stressors, conflict and overload, determine the level of satisfaction in the work environment. A determining factor for satisfaction is the perception that the individual holds towards his or her work environment. The effect of work conditions is as severe as the individual perceives it to be. As expected, there will be a difference in individual perceptions as per individual characteristics.

- Personality and affective traits

The Big Five personality factors have been researched in relation to work satisfaction. Factors such as conscientiousness, extraversion and neuroticism have been found to correlate with job satisfaction, which is a dimension of work satisfaction. In addition, Connolly and Viswesvaran (2000) established a link between job satisfaction and negative and positive affect. Research into this has however been contradictory and additional research is needed in order to reach consensus.

- Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is conceptualised as an individual's belief about his or her capability to perform behaviours necessary for the achievement of work goals. Self-efficacy is directly linked to job satisfaction, which is a contributing factor to work satisfaction.

- Goal-relevant environmental supports, resources and obstacles

Certain environmental variables play a key role in the achievement of individual goals and objectives. Variables such as material and social support promote individual satisfaction. The presence of environmental constraints and the absence of supports reduce satisfaction in the workplace.

These work satisfaction dimensions highlight the important contribution that an organisation could have on employee work satisfaction. The dimensions illustrate the importance of support, growth and independence in achieving work satisfaction. If the military environment could become supportive enough to allow single parents to achieve a majority of the work-related dimensions, it would likely increase their work satisfaction.

As conceptualised through the work satisfaction model developed by Lent and Brown, the realisation of work and personal objectives has an effect on work satisfaction. Giauque et al. (2012) support this notion, and further claim that individuals who cannot achieve their goals, reduce their work expectations in order to maintain some level of satisfaction. In most cases, the inability to achieve goals is caused by organisational constraints such as red tape, which leads to a form of satisfaction known as resigned satisfaction (Giauque et al., 2012). Resigned satisfaction manifests when individuals perceive a discrepancy between their aspirations and their work situation, which then results in them reducing their aspiration, which again reduces their effort and ultimately their productivity. A bureaucratic organisation, such as the SANDF, is expected to have employees who are high in resigned satisfaction. A level of flexibility is required in order for organisations to cater for single parents. A high level of red tape does not support the need for flexibility for single parents, which might lead to them to develop high levels of resigned satisfaction.

Büssing, Bissels, Fuchs and Perrar (1999), on the other hand, regard work satisfaction as a dynamic process. This theory moves away from the traditional conceptualisation of work satisfaction, which utilises a personal approach. The dynamic theory, as originally proposed by Bruggemann (1974), recognises that there is more than one form of work satisfaction. Bruggemann (1974) explains work satisfaction as a dynamic interactional process, which comprises three key variables, namely –

- a comparison of the actual work situation and personal aspirations;
- problem-solving behaviour; and
- changes in the level of behaviour.

Table 2.2 below provides a brief description of the six inclusive forms of work satisfaction as per the dynamic theory of work satisfaction (Bruggemann as cited in Büssing et al., 1999, p. 1004):

Table 2.2

Different forms of work satisfaction

Pseudo work satisfaction	A person feels dissatisfied with their work. Individual faces unsolvable problems or frustrating conditions. Denying the existence of the problems allows a person to experience pseudo satisfaction
Fixated work satisfaction	A person feels dissatisfied with their work. A person does not try to master the situation through problem solving
Constructive work dissatisfaction	A person feels dissatisfied with their work. While maintaining the level of aspiration, a person tries to master the situation by problem solving attempts on the basis of sufficient frustration tolerance
Resigned work satisfaction	A person feels indistinct work dissatisfaction and decreases the level of aspiration in order to adapt to negative aspects of the work situation on a lower level. By decreasing their level of aspiration, the person is able to attain a positive state of satisfaction once more
Progressive work satisfaction	A person feels satisfied with the work. By increasing the level of aspiration a person tries to achieve an even higher level of satisfaction
Stabilised work satisfaction	A person feels satisfied with their work, but is motivated to maintain the level of aspiration and the pleasurable state of satisfaction

(Bruggemann as cited in Büssing et al., 1999, p. 1004)

The dynamic nature of this theory dictates that, for a person to experience any form of work satisfaction, there has to be some interaction between him or her and the environment. Consequently, for organisations to understand what causes work satisfaction or dissatisfaction, an individual together with his or her environment has to be analysed as a whole. This means that, in order for the SANDF to understand and enhance work satisfaction for single parents, factors in the work and family domains of these families have to be brought together and evaluated for their influence on one another. Understanding this dynamic interaction for single parents will allow the SANDF to cater for their needs and ensure that they are loyal and committed soldiers who are ready to deploy effectively at any time.

2.3.2 Measurement of work satisfaction

Bérubé et al. (2007) developed the Satisfaction with Work Scale (SWWS), which was utilised to measure work satisfaction for this research (see par 3.5). The authors conceptualised work satisfaction by combining theories of wellbeing (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffith, 1985) with theories of psychological variables, such as subjective and cognitive wellbeing (Vallerand, 1997). Diener et al. (1985) were of the opinion that subjective wellbeing could be evaluated through a combination of negative affect, positive affect and general life satisfaction. In this regard, affect is understood as the emotional assessment of wellbeing and satisfaction as its cognitive counterpart. Satisfaction with work as a life domain provides the appraisal of wellbeing in relation to the work domain without being tied to a particular employment relationship in dynamic or unstable work contexts. Understandably so, the work-related wellbeing of individuals who occupy stable full-time jobs differs from those who have more than one job.

The SWWS focuses on people's work rather than on their job. Bérubé et al. (2007) highlight the multipurpose nature of the SWWS, which can also be applied as an indicator of work-related mental health (Kelloway & Day, 2005). Through the SWWS, work satisfaction can be evaluated within any organisational context, and indicates an individual's satisfaction with his or her career. The scale further indicates the extent to which people are involved in their work and the degree to which people intend to leave the organisation. Assessing the level of work satisfaction amongst single parents in the SANDF will give an indication of their satisfaction within their career as soldiers. As previously mentioned, the SANDF requires members who are willing, committed and satisfied in their job so that they may carry out their mission to a satisfactory level.

2.3.2.1 Positive outcomes of work satisfaction

The environment within which individuals work, inclusive of all its factors, has the ability to influence their wellbeing and satisfaction negatively or positively. Engström, Ljunggren, Lindqvist and Carlsson (2006) established a link between the psychosocial environment within which an individual works and his or her wellbeing. Individuals who perceive their work environment as supportive and conducive to the

attainment of work goals are likely to experience work satisfaction (mental health wellbeing), which ultimately leads to wellbeing.

Furthermore, various characteristics in the work environment and individual attitudes towards work have an effect on work satisfaction, which in turn results in the reduction of employee turnover (Kovner, Brewer, Wu, Cheng & Suzuki, 2006). In addition to environmental factors, the chances that an individual has to develop him- or herself and advance to superior levels in the work environment seem to have a contributing effect on work satisfaction (Kovner et al., 2006).

Bérubé et al. (2007) recognise that satisfaction with one's career could be accepted as an indicator of work satisfaction. Career satisfaction may be understood as the extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction that an individual enjoys from his or her career. According to Ngo, Fowley, Ji and Loi (2014), career satisfaction is associated with significant work outcomes, such as turnover intentions and organisational commitment. Simply put, individuals who are satisfied with their career will have high levels of work satisfaction and will likely remain in the organisation regardless of any challenges that they may come across.

2.3.2.2 *Negative outcomes of work satisfaction*

Moreau and Mageau (2012) recognise the effect of stress and distress on work satisfaction. According to these authors, individuals who work in giving or sacrificial and high pressure and stressful occupations, such as health care professionals, experience high levels of stress and psychological distress, which have a negative effect on their work satisfaction and productivity (Tellez, 2012). The researcher is of the opinion that these research results could be applicable in the military due to its work environment which is similar to that of health care professionals. It can be expected that stress will have a negative effect on the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF.

In their study, Gardulf et al. (2008) found a negative relationship between work satisfaction, an individual's work situation, and poor support for professional development. More often than not, single parents postpone opportunities for professional development because they do not have enough time to attend a course or they do not have someone to take care of their children when they are away. In

this regard, the conflict between work and family and poor social support is expected to have a negative effect on single-parent work satisfaction

Individuals with low levels of work satisfaction have the ability to influence the satisfaction of those with whom they interact. Furthermore, such individuals create unstable organisations and work environments. Low levels of work satisfaction bear cost implications for organisations in the form of low productivity and morale as well as high turnover and absenteeism (Pillay, 2006). Work satisfaction plays a key role in determining where individuals work and for whom as well as their intention to leave the organisation (Elçi & Alpan, 2008; Pillay, 2008).

Work-related stressors in the military include skills under-utilisation, few opportunities to participate in decision-making, little task significance and variety as well as low control and autonomy. The excessive demands placed on soldiers could have an effect on service quality and quantity. These problems however are not unique to the military; they are also experienced by employees in civilian organisations. These challenges have been known to affect and, more specifically, reduce the satisfaction level of employees in organisations (Campbell & Nobel, 2009).

2.3.3 Support for work satisfaction

According to Gardulf et al. (2008), one of the ways in which work satisfaction could be improved is through the implementation of career development and competence models. Such models will ensure that individuals receive opportunities for advancement through the recognition of competence while still providing a service. Häggström, Skovdahl, Fläckman, A.L. Kihlgren and Kihlgren (2005) support the notion that work satisfaction could be improved by highlighting that strategies such as supervision and support could be utilised by organisations to increase work satisfaction.

Work satisfaction amongst military forces seems to be poorly researched. No literature could be found which indicated the level of work satisfaction in the SANDF, particularly for single parents in the SANDF in relation to stress, social support, WFC and WFE. This research is expected to make a contribution in this regard and clarify the level of work satisfaction amongst single-parent soldiers in the SANDF.

2.4 STRESS AND SINGLE PARENTS

Stress is a concept which has been widely defined and researched in literature for over five decades (Krohne, 2002). The term originated in physics during investigations of resistance. However varied stress definitions may be, they all comprise three constant concepts, namely are person, stressor and stress reactions. House (1981, p. vii) defines stress as “a process or a system which includes not only the stressful event and the reaction to it, but all the intervening steps between”. The ability of stress to influence key adaptational outcomes, such as somatic health, wellbeing and social functioning has led to great interest in health psychology. Lazarus and Folkman (1986, p. 63) define stress as “a relationship with the environment that the person appraises as significant for his or her wellbeing and in which the demands tax or exceed coping resources”. The definition provided by Lazarus and Folkman was applied in this study.

According to Russo and Fallon (2015, p. 407), stress “is defined by the situations or life events that require adjustment”. This means that stress is subjective to an individual’s perception of the stressful event and how he or she responds to it. Different soldiers could thus experience the same event; however, their experiences of stress will differ according to their subjective perceptions of the stressful event. Previous research across different fields documented a negative relationship between stress and work satisfaction (Beckers et al., 2008; Dougherty et al., 2009; Duffy & Lent, 2009; Giaque et al., 2012; Hasson & Arnetz, 2006).

A constant notion of stress is its continuous presence in the environment–person relationship as a mental reaction to everyday situations that either take away from or threatens individual resources. Individuals in stressful occupations, such as the military, health services or teaching, have the potential to affect those around them negatively. Four key contributors to stress levels in these occupations are time pressures, physical conditions, conflicts as well as opportunities for rewards, and recognition (Hong et al., 2010).

Stress is a concept which has been variedly studied and theorised. Within these theories, one finds two categories. The first category encapsulates theories that are context-specific, which means that stress is conceptualised only in that particular context and the understanding cannot be applied in other contexts. The second

category comprises more general theories of stress, which allow meaning to be applied to different contexts and life circumstances. For the purpose of this study, a general theory of stress was selected as it fitted the notion that single parents encounter general stress more than specific stress. In addition to the categories, various theories have been developed by researchers to conceptualise stress. These theories indicate different approaches in the field of stress, i.e. the systemic stress theory (Selye, 1976) based on physiology and psychobiology, the motivational theory of stress (Hobfoll, 1989), as well as the psychological stress model (Lazarus, 1966).

Selye (1976) developed a theory of systemic stress which assumed that non-specific reactions in the body create a specific pattern of response to stress. Selye (1976) calls the reaction the general adaptation syndrome (GAS). The theory covers three stages:

- First, an alarm reaction occurs, which is the shock and excitement phase that can be seen through reactions of the autonomic system, e.g. an increase of adrenaline.
- Second, is the stage of resistance when symptoms of the excitement phase disappear, and the disappearance can be viewed as an organism's reaction to the stressor.
- Lastly, the stage of exhaustion appears, which explains why the failure of an organism to adapt to the stressor leads to its exhaustion (Selye, 1976).

Based his theory, Selye developed the notion that if a stimulus occurs long enough, all organisms react to it in a similar negative way.

A general understanding of stress has been conceptualised through the conservation of resources (COR) theory (Williams et al., 2012). The COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) is motivational in nature and operates under the notion that individuals continuously strive to obtain, retain, foster and protect their resources. This and other resource theories of stress do not primarily focus on the causes of stress; instead, such theories focus on the resources that individuals possess, which contribute to their maintenance of wellbeing in the face of stress (Krohne, 2002). These resources may be in the form of objects, personal characteristics, energy and conditions.

The COR theory consists of three underlying principles, namely:

- the primacy of resource loss;

- resource investment; and
- loss and gains spirals.

According to the principle of primacy of resource loss, the loss of resources is more important than gaining them. This translates into the idea that the threat of loss of individual resources has the ability to motivate individuals more than gaining such resources. When a single parent fears that he or she may lose the little resources that he or she has, this fear becomes a stressful factor in the person's life. The fear of loss of resources also doubles as a motivating factor and drives the single parent to put relevant mechanisms in place which will assist in preserving resources and thus reducing stress (Balaji, Claussen, Smith, Visser, Morales & Perou, 2007; Umberson, Pudrovska & Reczek, 2010).

The second principle assumes that individuals need to invest resources in order to prevent their loss and the ultimate depletion of motivation to obtain new resources. This principle requires single parents to expand the resources that they have. For example, single parents might invest money (a financial resource) in order to ensure that it lasts longer, or reciprocate supportive behaviour towards a good friend to ensure that friend would be available whenever needed in the future.

The third principle carries the notion that because individuals who lose resources have fewer resources, such individuals become increasingly incapable of withstanding further loss of resources. Therefore, ultimately the loss cycles move quicker than gain cycles (Gorgievski & Hobfoll, 2008). Single parents who do not preserve or re-invest their resources lose them faster than they can gain new ones. This becomes a stressful factor for them and if it continues, it has the ability to spill over into their work and life domains. The effect of this in either domain will likely be negative because instead of being present and effective in the domains, single parents will be pre-occupied with the persistent stress caused by the loss of resources.

Lazarus (1966) assumed a different approach when theorising stress. His approach led to the concept of psychological stress. In his theory, Lazarus (1966) emphasises two key concepts, namely appraisal (a person's assessment of the importance of what is happening for his or her wellbeing) and coping (an individual's active attempts to manage demands). Lazarus (1966) was not alone in his notion that

human reactions to stress were not general but rather depended on individual characteristics. In addition to holding the same notion, Fatkin, Hudgens, Torre, King, and Chatterton (1991, p. 75) define stress as –

a multi-faceted, dynamic and interactive process with psychological and physiological dimensions which emphasises stressor variability and human variations in personality, perceptions, experience and expectations as main factors that define stress within a given individual.

For the purpose of this study, the definition provided by Fatkin et al. (1991) was applied for understanding stress in single parents.

The Lazarus (1966) theory has undergone numerous revisions, which ultimately led to his explanation of stress as a relationship between an individual and his or her environment. This is the key similarity between the Selye (1976) and Lazarus (1966) approaches. Both researchers were of the opinion that stress occurred as a result of various factors experienced by an individual, which alter his or her current state and leads to adjustment.

Various instruments have been developed to measure stress. These instruments measure stress on two levels, i.e. objective and subjective. An identified challenge with utilising objective measures is their assumption that stress events are the independent causes of illness behaviour or pathology. In order to correct the false understanding and evaluation of stress, Cohen, Kamarck and Mermelstein (1983) developed the Perceived Stress Survey (PSS), a subjective measure for evaluating stress. The instrument seems to have found roots in both the psychological and resource theories. It emphasises the subjective appraisal of stress followed by one's activation of available resources. A further discussion of the PSS may be found in Chapter 3 (par 3.5.1).

For single parents, the development and experience of stress cannot be attributed to a single area of their life. Stress can be generated in either their work or personal life; hence, the researcher's choice of a general measurement of stress. The dynamic and interactional nature of stress for single parents can be expected to have a negative effect on their work satisfaction. As previously mentioned, stress and work satisfaction are dependent on one's subjective appraisal. The more stress one experiences the more the likelihood that their work satisfaction will decrease.

For single parents, the family and work interaction is characterised by a competing demands framework whereby strains and stressors at work draw resources from the family, and negative energy in the family environment spills over into the work domain and affects the individual's performance (Sandberg et al., 2013). Barling, Kelloway and Frone (as cited in Tziner, Rabenu, Radomski & Belkin, 2015) observed that when this occurs in the workplace, stress can have far-reaching consequences to both the single parent and the organisation.

2.4.1 Stress in the military

The military environment is in itself characterised by stressful events and unique stressors (Dolan & Ender, 2008). Soldiers spend extended periods of time away from their families, and they participate in operations which place their lives at risk. A highlighted element that may enable military families to cope successful during separations is family resilience. Family resilience is explained as characteristics, dimensions and properties of families, which help them to be reactive to crisis and resilient to disruption (Troxel, Trail, Jaycox & Chandra, 2016). Stress is a universal occurrence among active-duty military personnel and has been associated with a variety of mental and job performance outcomes in the past (Hourani, Williams & Kress, 2006). With the reduction of military forces and increased demand for military service, individual soldiers find themselves in a situation where they spend an increasing amount of time at work and away from their families (Bell, Bartone, Schumm, & Gade, 1997).

Bartone (as cited in Bruwer & Van Dyk, 2005) describes stress in military context as events or forces in the environment, outside the person, as opposed to subjective internal responses. According to Bartone, stress in the military originates from sources outside of the person, in his or her environment which affect the person and result in a response. According to Bartone (as cited in Bruwer & Van Dyk, 2005), interactionism is a relevant approach for addressing stress in the military. Interactionism may be explained as a focus on the person, the stressor and the interaction that takes place between them. The interactionism approach is depicted in Figure 2.1. This process begins with the presence of a stressor, which refers to forces in the environment whether psychological or physical, which affect the individual:

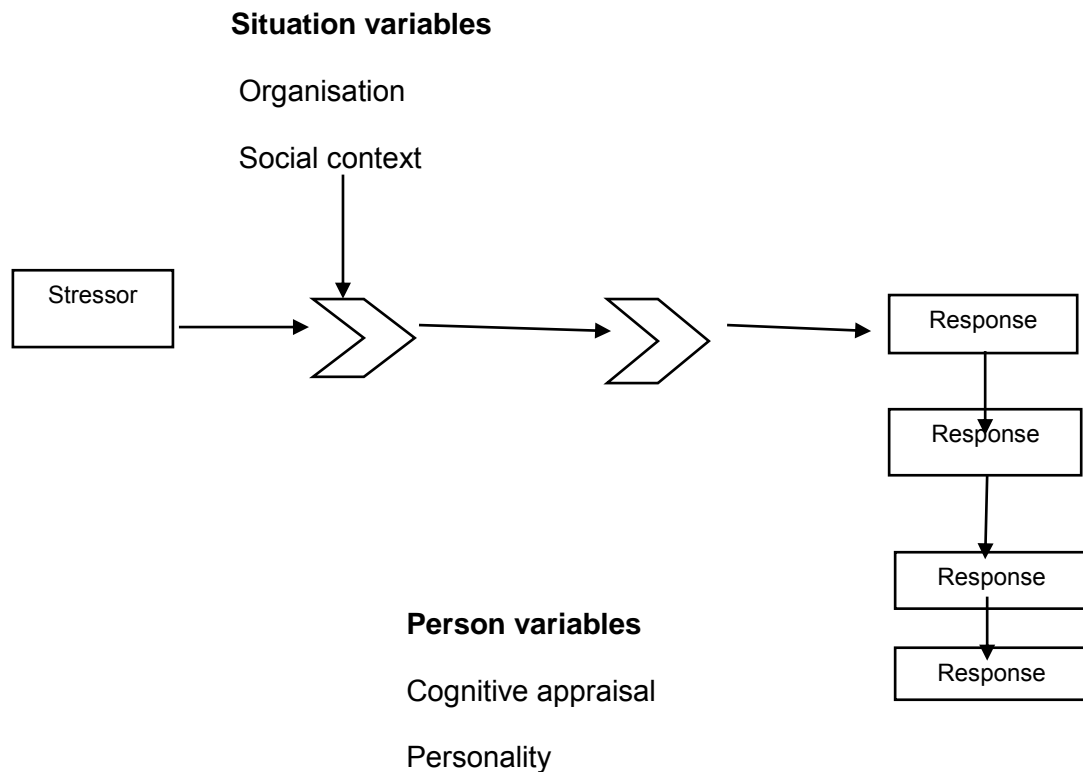


Figure 2.1. The pathway of stressors in the environment (stimuli) to the responses of the organism

(Bartone as cited in Bruwer & Van Dyk, 2005, p. 31)

Figure 2.1 indicates variables that might influence how stressors are processed within the military. According to the above model, stress could have a significant influence on the soldier's mental and physical health within the military environment.

As defence forces participate more and more in operations other than war, it is expected that soldiers would come across different types of stressors. High levels of mental duress have the potential to reduce the soldier's self-efficacy or confidence in his or her ability to implement actions and attain goals (Bandura, 1977, 1997). Furthermore, the stress that soldiers are likely to experience when completing activities in current operations may be made more complex by the presence of non-combatants and friendly forces in the operational environment (Morelli & Burton, 2009). Soldiers will likely experience intrapersonal conflict caused by demands placed on them to choose between the mission and their individual values.

Bartone (2006) conducted research into the current types of stressors that soldiers come across. Through extensive and in-depth research, Bartone (2006) was able to identify five primary psychological stress dimensions that soldiers encounter in

modern military operations, namely isolation, powerlessness, danger, boredom and ambiguity. Another dimension, workload, was added as deemed relevant for the frequency of deployments, long workdays and hours. Table 2.3 below displays a summary of the psychological stress dimensions.

Table 2.3

Primary stressor dimensions in modern military operations

<i>Stressor</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
1. Isolation	Remote location Foreign culture and language Unreliable communication tools Distant from family and friends Newly configured units, do not know your co-workers
2. Ambiguity	Unclear mission or changing mission Unclear rules of engagement Unclear command or leadership structure Role confusion (what is my job?) Unclear norms or standards of behaviour (what is acceptable here and what is not?)
3. Powerlessness	Movement restrictions Rules of engagement constraints on response options Policies prevent intervening, providing help Forced separation from local culture, people, events and places Unresponsive supply chain – trouble getting needed supplies and repair parts Differing standards of pay, movement, behaviour, etc. for different units in area Indeterminate deployment length – do not know when they will be going home Do not know or cannot influence what is happening with family back home
4. Boredom (alienation)	Long periods of repetitive work activities without variety Lack of work that can be construed as meaningful or important Overall mission or purpose not understood as worthwhile or important Few options for play and entertainment
5. Danger (threat)	Real risk of serious injury or death, from enemy fire, bullets, mortars, mines, explosive devices, etc. Accidents, including ‘friendly fire’ Disease, infection, toxins in the environment – chemical, biological or nuclear materials used as weapons
6. Workload	High frequency, duration and pace of deployments Long working hours and/or days during deployments Long working hours and/or days in periods before and after deployments

(Bartone, 2006, p. S135)

The abovementioned dimensions affect soldiers whether they are deployed externally or internally. This effect influences the soldier's performance and commitment to the force, his or her wellbeing as well as the level of satisfaction with his or her work (Bartone, 2006). A soldier who has difficulty adjusting to the stressors might consider leaving the force, which may be seen as an indication of poor career fit and/or wellbeing which are indicators of work satisfaction. Bartone (2006) further noted a negative relationship between military stress and work outcomes.

Stress combined with combat has negative psychological outcomes for soldiers, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, alcohol and drug abuse, suicide, behaviour changes etc. (Adler, Huffman, Bliese & Castro, 2005; Campbell & Nobel, 2009). Other studies on the effect of deployment and combat-related stress have focused on psychological, family and behavioural outcomes (Ogle & Young, 2016). An attempt to enrich these outcomes through the development of effective interventions emphasises the need for researchers to understand the type of stress that faces soldiers while at home and during deployment correctly.

McAllister, Mackey, Hackney and Perrewé (2015) suggest that identity strain may be identified as another source of stress for soldiers when they are outside the military. Identity strain explains the inability of a soldier to function effectively in social settings outside the military. Identity strain has the potential to influence workplace outcomes, such as complete investment of personal resources towards work tasks when combined with personal resources, such as education, object resources (financial security) and energy resources (relevant work experience) (Hobfoll, 1989). The researcher is of the opinion that identity strain is not only applicable once soldiers leave the force. Identity strain may be a challenge even during service. A single-parent soldier may lack the necessary personal resources that will allow him or her to compartmentalise and separate their personas between work and family.

Due to the unique nature of stressors found in the military, Dolan and Ender (2008) are of the opinion that the appraisal of stress and choice of coping strategies may also be unique. In addition, Dolan and Ender (2008) note that the presence of stress in the workplace does not automatically imply distress. The appraisal of stressful events and the subsequent perception of coping strategies as successful are what determine health and wellbeing in the workplace. This observation is quite relevant in

the military context as military personnel are frequently confronted with various challenges or stressors and almost always react successfully to the challenges.

Numerous possible sources of stress have been identified for military single parents, especially single mothers (Tucker & Kelley, 2009). Stress for single parents does not only occur in the work environment due to the continuous interlink between their work and life domains. Due to their responsibilities and overtaxed resources, single parents are likely to experience stress in other areas of their life, such as their families. As previously mentioned, stress is defined by the context within which it occurs. It is therefore expected that there will be a negative relationship between stress and work satisfaction. As stress has previously been reported as one of the challenges that single parents come across, and soldiers need to be psychologically and emotionally available to be productive and have high levels of work satisfaction, an assumption can be made that the more a single parent soldier experiences stress, the less his or her level of work satisfaction will be.

2.4.2 Stress and work satisfaction for single parents

The stressor–strain theory is one of the frameworks that may be utilised when evaluating the effects of stress on health and organisational outcomes (Beehr & Jex as cited in Dolan & Ender, 2008). Stress has the ability to take away one's engagement, commitment and ultimate performance in the workplace. When confronted with stress, an individual's level of task performance is likely to reduce (Siniscalchi, Kimmel, Couturier & Murray, 2011). The military is a type of environment, which requires individuals to concentrate and focus on their task at all times. Failure to be completely present during task performance may lead to fatal accidents and errors (McDougall & Drummond, 2010), especially in combat fields, such as engineering and infantry, which utilise explosives and specialised weapons respectively.

R. Kaplan and Kaplan (1989) are of the opinion that interceding the stress process by influencing how an individual responds to stress has the potential to improve individual performance. This stress reaction interception may be conducted in the form of attention restoration theory (ART). ART supposes that certain experiences offer restoration more than others. Such experiences allow an individual to move away from the stressful experience before his or her concentration breaks and he or

she makes mistakes. Kaplan (1973, 1983, 1995) recognised that, in order for ART to be effective, four criteria (conditions) have to be met, namely –

- being away (i.e. one has to be in different place, away from all sources of stress);
- extent (i.e. experiences need to be perceived as sufficient by the individual);
- fascination (i.e. the experience needs to appeal to and be interesting to the person); and
- compatibility (experiences need to meet the person's expectations).

The researcher is of the opinion that, in the case of single parents in the military, ART could be applied successfully in either the home or work domain as stress could develop in either of these domains.

Previous research indicates a negative relationship between stress and work satisfaction (Beckers et al., 2008; Dougherty et al., 2009; Wiese & Salmela-Aro, 2008). Several studies have been conducted focusing on stress and work satisfaction. The majority of this research focuses on highly demanding work contexts such as health care. It should be noted that for the purpose of this study, the focus was on negative stress only. The majority of literature points to a negative relationship between stress and work outcomes. Moreau and Mageau (2012) observe that, in their study, the majority of individuals who worked in highly stressful occupations experienced low levels of work satisfaction. Such dissatisfaction is further experienced in the early stages of one's career. In addition to the low levels of work satisfaction, individuals in demanding work contexts experience high levels of psychological difficulties, which are manifested in the form of stress and psychological distress. Moreau and Mageau (2012) also noted that one of the contributing factors to low work satisfaction in such work environments is the lack of autonomy support by the worker's supervisor and colleagues, which has an effect on employee wellbeing.

A negative relationship has been found between work satisfaction and stress (Beckers et al., 2008; Dougherty et al., 2009; Duffy & Lent, 2009; Giauque et al., 2012; Hasson & Arnetz, 2006; Wiese & Salmela-Aro, 2008). No studies have been conducted yet evaluating stress and work satisfaction in the military. The little work satisfaction literature that is available focuses on the relationship between work satisfaction and job satisfaction. An understanding of work satisfaction shows it

distinction from job satisfaction. Although they are both work-related outcomes, job satisfaction is merely a component of work satisfaction. This study will possibly contribute to literature in this regard.

Based on the negative relationships that have been documented between stress and work satisfaction as well as between a lack of social support and work satisfaction in work environments that are as stressful as the military, it can be expected that the relationship between stress and single-parent work satisfaction will bear similar results. The majority of single parents do not have adequate support systems, which results in their inability to function successfully in both their work and life domains. Previous research has found a negative relationship between poor support and work satisfaction. In order for one to survive in an environment as demanding as the military, social support is a necessity. The availability of social support for single-parent soldiers can be expected to have a positive influence on their work satisfaction.

2.5 SOCIAL SUPPORT

Many military families struggle with challenges such as stress, frequency of relocation or separation as a result of the distance between the home unit and the soldier's work or deployment (be it internal or external) (Russo & Fallon, 2014). As a consequence, this separation has been related to mental health problems such as depression and anxiety (Reppert, Buzetta & Rose, 2014; Rodriguez & Margolin, 2015). In the case of single-parent soldiers in particular, separation negatively affects their functioning in the workplace. Separation adds to the already difficult challenges that single parents face. In order for single parents to cope effectively with such challenges, some form of support has to be available.

A study of available literature indicated social support, a derivative of social relationships, as a possible resource for single parents (House, Umberson & Landis, 1988; Johnson & Ling, 2013). A study by Vaughn-Coaxum, Smith, Iverson and Vogt (2015) highlighted that due to the burden associated with being a single parent, these parents need more instrumental and emotional support than partnered parents. A lack of such support results in single parents constantly worrying about the wellbeing and adjustment of their children. In addition, single parents who lack social support are likely to suffer from poor physical and emotional health (Cook,

2012; Whitley, Fuller-Thomson & Brennenstuhl, 2015). Tucker and Kelly (2009) suggest that, in order for them to function effectively, single parents require work support, family support, a supportive peer network as well as neighbourhood or community support. Regardless of the numerous reported positive social support outcomes, certain authors dispute the importance of social support for single parents. Williams (2016) is of the opinion that social support could become a barrier for single mothers.

The utility and relevance of social support as an explanation to why some individuals function, perform well and succeed in the face of adversity while others do poorly have been shown in theory and can be traced back to the 1980s (Bloom & Spiegel, 1984; Taylor, Conger, Robins & Widaman, 2015). Literature provides multiple definitions for social support. Lin, Ensel, Simeone and Kuo (as cited in Skomorovsky, 2014, p. 44) define social support as “support to an individual from social ties to other individuals, groups and the larger community and to the perception that one is cared for by others”. For the purpose of this study, social support was defined as “information leading a person to believe that they are cared for and loved, esteemed and valued and integrated within a network of communication and mutual obligation” (Cobb as cited in Overdale & Gardner, 2012, p. 313).

Social support has proved to protect people from a number of pathological states, such as psychological distress (Smith, Benight & Cieslak, 2013) and life situations such as arthritis, alcoholism, depression and the social breakdown syndrome (Cobb, 1976). Social support may be provided by various parties. Individuals may draw social support from sources such as their local community, relatives, friends, partners, their family and even co-workers. The sources of social support do not operate independently of one another; an individual may simultaneously draw social support from multiple sources (Dale, Ozakinci, Adair & Humphris, 2013; Halbesleben, 2006; House, 1981; Skomorovsky, 2014). An individual requires support from different sources in order for him or her to fulfil his or her needs. Even so, it has been claimed that social support from a spouse is the most significantly associated cause of wellbeing (Antonucci, Lansford & Akiyama, as cited in Skomorovsky, 2014). According to Lim and Lee (2011), social support from the family promotes positive workplace outcomes, such as harmony and respect.

In order to obtain a deeper understanding of social support, a broad description of the various perspectives taken to explore the construct is needed. In their investigation of the social support theory and various social support measures, Lakey and Cohen (2000, p. 30) provide the various perspectives taken to understand social support. These perspectives may be found in Table 2.4 below.

Table 2.4

Theoretical perspectives of social support

Perspective	Intellectual tradition	Aspect of support emphasized	Types of support measures emphasized	Support operates	Emphasizes stress buffering or main effects of support
Supportive actions	Stress and coping theory and research	Supportive behaviours provided by others	Reports or observations of supportive behaviours	By promoting coping	Stress buffering
Appraisal	Stress and coping theory and research	Perceived availability of actual support	Perceptions of availability of specific types of support	By promoting less negative appraisals of stress	Stress buffering
Social cognition	Experimental social psychology; pragmatist philosophy	Global evaluative cognitive representation of others	Global evaluations of support quality or availability	By influencing evaluations of self and others	Main effects
Symbolic interactionism	Sociology; pragmatist philosophy	Social roles	Social roles	By providing identity	Main effects
Relationships	Research in personal relationships	Companionship, undermining, intimacy	Various	By various mechanisms	Main effects

(Lakey & Cohen, 2000, p. 30)

The above table indicates various perspectives held towards social support. The present study applied the appraisal perspective of social support. In this study, social support was evaluated through the perception that individuals hold. The appraisal perspective describes social support in terms of the extent to which single parents perceive whether or not they receive support and the level of support they receive from their environment. In this instance, the environment refers to personal relationships and the organisation. When individuals are not overwhelmed by their stressful environments, they react positively to them and are able to cope. If single parents experience stress, their appraisal of the stress situation and the resources

available to them (i.e. social support) allows them to react positively to the situation and to cope.

Social support offers individuals the courage to face life challenges or stressors, which they would have been unable to face in the absence of their support system. Social support is founded on three theoretical beliefs, namely social comparison theory, social exchange theory and social competence.

- ◆ Social comparison theory

According to the social comparison theory, people develop their self-concept by comparing themselves to others in their preferred reference groups (Swann & Brown, 1990). The social comparison, which makes up an important part of self-concept development, improves coping abilities, self-esteem, emotional adjustment and psychological wellbeing. In order for it to be successful, social comparison requires the process of social exchange (Hinson Langford, Bowsher, Maloney & Lillis, 1997).

- ◆ Social exchange theory

The social exchange theory explains human behaviour as an exchange of mutually rewarding activities in which the receipt of rewards is contingent on favours returned (Tilden & Gaylen, 1987). Giving and receiving social support have been identified in the past as indicators of life satisfaction. In order for a person to give and receive social support, he or she requires a particular level of social competence.

- ◆ Social competence

Social competence can be understood as the ability of a person to interact effectively with his or her social environment. Social competence is necessary for the formation and maintenance of relationships. When one's social competence is decreased, he or she experiences a sense of social isolation, which may lead to a state of negative psychological health (Hudson et al., 2016).

Social competence, social exchange and social comparison operate only within a positive climate that is characterised by protection and assistance. Within the positive climate, four attributes of social support are found: emotional support, instrumental support, informational support and appraisal support. In order for support to continue within each attribute, exchange and reciprocity must be present.

The four attributes of social support (Hajli, Shanmugam, Hajli, Khani, & Wang, 2014; Hinson Langford et al., 1997; Hudson et al., 2016; Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991) are discussed below.

◆ *Emotional support*

Emotional support includes providing care, empathy, love and trust. This is the most important category through which support is conveyed to others. When reflecting characteristics of emotional social support, it seems that support is rendered through communication, which leads to the information that an individual is cared for and loved, esteemed and valued and is part of a network of mutual obligation.

◆ *Instrumental support*

Instrumental support may be understood as the provision of tangible services and goods. This implies that instrumental support is more practical than emotional support. It involves providing concrete assistance, such as lending a member of your platoon money or standing in for them when they are unable to do so.

◆ *Informational support*

This type of support explains the information that is provided to a person during a time of stress. Informational support refers to assistance people need to solve their problems. An illustration would be informing single parents in your platoon of available after-hours child care services in and around your unit for when they are on duty.

◆ *Appraisal support*

Involves the provision of information that would assist a person in conducting self-evaluation rather than problem-solving. Also known as appraisal support, it consists of expressions that affirm the relevance of statements or acts made by another.

For the purpose of this study, the focus was on emotional (perceived). Perceived support, which may be described as the subjective belief that one has an available and supportive social network, is more indicative of wellbeing and mental health in the workplace as compared to other forms of support (Lakey & Orehek, 2011; Taylor et al., 2015; Thoits, 2011). An explanation of the relationship between perceived social support and mental health may be seen through the relational regulation theory (RRT) (Lakey & Oherek, 2011).

According to Lakey and Oherek (2011), RRT describes the relationship between perceived support and mental health. RRT explains negative thoughts that a person holds towards him- or herself, the world around him or her as well as the future. Kenny et al. (as cited in Lakey & Oherek, 2011, p. 484) define relational influences as

those influences that occur when a provider elicits affect, action, or thought in a recipient that is not characteristic of how the recipient typically responds to other providers and is not characteristic of what the provider typically elicits in other recipients.

RRT highlights the importance of healthy social interactions amongst people and their environment and the importance of supportive social relationships in reducing mental health problems; which forms part of work satisfaction. RRT operates through eight principles, namely:

- recipients regulate their affect, thought and action through social interaction;
- social interaction is the primary relational determinant of affect, action and thought, which means that the effectiveness of support differs across support providers and recipients;
- relational regulation occurs primarily in ordinary (day-to-day) yet affectively consequential social interaction;
- relational regulation occurs mainly through conversation and shared activities, which emphasise the recipient's cognitive understandings of relationships and quasi-relationships;
- perceived support is based primarily on relational regulation of affect through ordinary interactions and also on enacted support at times (i.e. during the initial interaction, a recipient infers a provider's level of support from expectancies about whether or not the provider will be able to regulate the recipient's affect);
- relational regulation is dynamic because individuals change activities, interaction partners and conversations with the aim of regulating affect optimally;
- social support interventions will be more effective if they encourage relational regulation (i.e. relational interventions will ensure recipient-provider fit in order to create supportive relationships); and

- the wider the diversity of potential supportive relationships and quasi-relationships available to recipients, the better the chances of effective regulation (Lackey & Oherek, 2011).

The rationale behind the inclusion of RRT in this study was that the study focused on work satisfaction, which is an indicator of mental health (wellbeing) in the workplace. RRT focuses on the importance of positive social relationships, which have been found to be a key factor for the wellbeing of single parents (see Author, date). Supportive relationships (social interactions) allow single parents to divide their resources amongst their roles. For example, single parents can invest themselves fully in their work knowing well that their children are well taken care of by someone in their support network, or single parents can call on someone with whom they share common hobbies during leisure time which will increase their wellbeing. Both examples illustrate how supportive relationships could contribute in a positive way towards wellbeing for single parents. Single parents who experience high levels of wellbeing can be expected to experience high levels of work satisfaction.

The social cognitive theory developed by Bandura (1977) could be utilised to explain the relationship between an individual and his or her social network through self-efficacy. According to this theory, individuals' self-efficacy reciprocally interacts with environmental factors and behaviour through a mechanism known as triadic reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1977) (ongoing feedback mechanism). Social support influences the interactional process through an individual's self-esteem, environmental factors and behaviour. The role that social support plays in this interactional process depends on the perceptions held by an individual (Smith et al., 2013). If a person believes that he or she has adequate support (a resource) to function effectively in the work and life domain, his or her self-efficacy is increased and the interactional process becomes positive. If a person does not perceive adequate support, his or her self-efficacy becomes less and the interactional process becomes negative.

Social support can also be conceptualised through the COR theory. The COR theory is based on the premise that employees actively seek to protect, preserve and rebuild resources. The COR model operates under the principle that stress is the result of a threat to resources, the actual loss of a resource or the insufficient gain of additional resources. Hobfoll (1989) argues that social support could increase an

individual's available resources as well as reinforce or replace other resources that have been lacking. Building on the COR theory, Halbesleben (2006) as well as Ferguson, Carlson, Zivnuska and Whitten (2012) purport that when employees receive support from co-workers and significant others, they receive additional resources which help them balance the demands placed upon them by the life and work domain, and ultimately increase their satisfaction in said domains.

According to the COR theory, individuals could attain resources such as understanding from their supervisor, support in performing family-related duties as well as support from co-workers. Acquisition of the afore-mentioned resources increases an employee's perception of his or her self-efficacy, which explains the employee's ability to accomplish work and family role-related expectations successfully (Ferguson et al., 2012).

According to Cobb (1976), social support begins in utero, is recognised best at the maternal breast and is communicated in different ways, most importantly in the way a baby is held by its mother. As the child progresses in life, support is drawn from other members of the family, then from peers at work, from the community and possibly in special cases, from a professional helper (Cobb, 1976). For military personnel, the family is the most important source of social support (Russell et al., 2016; Shinga, 2015). Such support improves the soldier's wellbeing and further acts as a buffer for military-related challenges (Skomorovsky, 2014). Lim and Lee (2011) further promote social support by postulating that it acts as a resource, which increases an individual's ability to cope with stress.

The higher a person's perception of social support, the more he or she will cognitively appraise themselves as having the ability to deal with work challenges. This means that the more single parents perceive themselves as having adequate social support, the more it is likely that they will experience a feeling of being able to adequately overcome challenges within both their work and family environments. Additionally, social support increases positive outcomes such as wellbeing following a stressful event. Furthermore, social support has been identified as a strong predictor of job satisfaction (see par 2.4.2) (Rashid, Nordin, Omar & Ismail, 2011). Based on these research findings, social support is expected to have a positive effect on work satisfaction.

One of the various forms of social support that may be seen in the family domain and workplace is instrumental support. According to Frone, Yardley and Markel (1997), the provision of instrumental support from the work and family domain reduces overload, time commitment and distress. Some authors go as far as calling social support a 'survival strategy' for single mothers (Cook, 2012).

The expansion of social support can be seen in its ability to yield positive outcomes in both the work and family domains. Taylor et al. (2015) highlight the importance of social support in parenting. Parents who perceive themselves as being adequately supported by their networks become better parents in the process and display increased positive affect towards their children. The results obtained by Taylor et al. (2015) indicate the importance of social support for parents and further highlight the possible dangers for parents, more specifically single parents, who have inadequate support.

An emerging form of support regarding research into single parents in the military is parentification. Hooper et al. (2014, p. 24) define parentification as –

a distortion of, disturbance in, or lack of appropriate boundaries between family subsystems, resulting in a functional or emotional role reversal in which the child takes on adult responsibilities that are inappropriate for his or her development stage and age.

Single parents, particularly those in the military, are constantly faced with the need to be away from their families. Having a child around who can assume adult caretaker roles during absence lessens the burden and may work towards balancing demand. Parentification, however, may be positive for the parent but negative for the child.

Various methods have been developed to measure social support. For the purpose of this study, social support was measured by the MOS-SSS (Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991). The measure was founded on the social support approaches of researchers Cohen and Wils; House and Kahn; Cohen and Syme to list a few, and focuses on dimensions that are supported as the most important for health/wellbeing-related outcomes. The measure consists of the emotional/informational, affective, tangible and positive social interaction dimensions of social support. For a further discussion of the scale (see par 3.5.2)

In their investigation of the relationship between social support and work satisfaction, Wagner and French (2010) found a positive correlation between the two constructs. Social support was found to be closely related to supervisor support, co-worker relations and nature of the work, which are key parts of work satisfaction. Rashid et al. (2011) found supporting results for the positive relationship between social support and work satisfaction. The authors additionally found a positive relationship between social support and WFE (the application of resources gained in the work or life domain in a receiver domain to increase satisfaction and reduce conflict) (see par 2.7).

The majority of research conducted towards social support and satisfaction in the work domain focuses on social support and job satisfaction. The studies indicate a positive relationship where social support has either an incremental or moderating effect on job satisfaction (Fila, Paik & Griffeth, 2014; Macdonald & Levy, 2016; Purpora & Blegen, 2015; Rathi & Barath, 2013; Sultan & Rashid, 2015). As noted previously (see par 2.4.2), job satisfaction is a facet of work satisfaction. Building on the aforementioned, the researcher is of the opinion that there is a positive relationship between social support and work satisfaction.

2.6 WORK–FAMILY CONFLICT

WFC has been acknowledged as a form of stress that many people experience because of the constant conflicting demands on them by their work and family. WFC influences various life- and work-related outcomes ranging from organisation commitment to turnover, job dissatisfaction, psychological distress and satisfaction with life (Carlson et al., 2000). Furthermore, WFC has been found to affect the wellbeing of employees (Goh, Ilies & Wilson, 2015). Even so, organisations have not altered their expectations of employees. According to Kelly et al. (2014), many organisations still carry the perception that committed and promotable employees work full-time and for longer hours without taking leave for personal reasons.

The perception of WFC seems to be dependent on the traditional attitudes that one holds. According to Porfeli and Mortimer (2010), when WFC occurs, women who hold the traditional view that women are homemakers increasingly dedicate their efforts to the family domain, and traditional men become increasingly committed to their work. Regardless of the afore-mentioned, there is a general belief that women

experience WFC more often than their male counterparts because of their primary role as homemakers (Byron as cited in Porfeli & Mortimer, 2010). Liu et al. (2015) also found that an employee's wellbeing affects his or her perception of WFC. An employee with adequate wellbeing is able to fulfil the demands from the work and home environment effectively and does not experience significant levels of conflict between the two environments. In this manner, there is little conflict between work and family because demands are met.

As previously mentioned, the military is a greedy institution, which expects its members to place its demands ahead of their own. In terms of performance and commitment, WFC thwarts maximum performance by soldiers. Soldiers who are constantly worried about the wellbeing of their families will not be effective in the force (Vuga & Juvan, 2013). The constant worry results in the unfortunate likelihood of hampering the successful execution of duty. The wellbeing and satisfaction of soldiers depend on that of their families. Consequently, the effectiveness of the military depends on the wellbeing of its members. It is therefore crucial that the military promote the wellbeing of members directly or indirectly through care of their families.

Research on WFC echoes the definition by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985, p. 77) who define WFC as "a form of interrole conflict in which role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect". The conflicting relationship between work and family seems bidirectional in nature (Carlson et al., 2000) meaning that work can influence family and vice versa. According to Greenhaus and Powell (2003), WFC occurs when participation in a particular work activity interferes with participation in a competing family activity or when work stress has a negative effect on behaviour within the family domain. For example, WFC may occur when a soldier is placed in a promotional post, which will require him or her to commit more hours or to travel more than before. On the other hand, family-work conflict (FWC) is experienced when stressful or disturbing issues in the family have a negative spillover into the work domain.

In an attempt to understand WFC better, Gutek, Searle and Klepa (1991) developed two frameworks, namely the rational view and the traditional framework. The rational view purports that the more time one dedicates in either the work or family domain, the more WFC one is likely to experience. The traditional framework purports that

individuals experience WFC based on their gender-associated roles. Women are expected to experience more WFC than men. The rationale behind this is that women traditionally play a bigger role in the family domain than men and because of this, women do not perceive increased involvement in the family domain as an imposition or cause of conflict.

WFC has been explained by Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek and Rosenthal (as cited in Ahmad, 2008) using the role theory framework. The role theory predicts that the expectation surrounding each of the different roles that a person performs could generate inter-role conflict when they involve pressure to dominate the time of the focal person to satisfy all expectations of his or her work and family roles since each role requires time, energy and commitment.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) conceptualised WFC on the basis of source of conflict. WFC may be divided into three main forms of conflict, i.e. time-based, strain-based and behaviour-based conflicts (Carlson et al., 2000; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996). Time-based conflict refers to the conflict that arises when the time devoted to one role makes it difficult for the individual to participate in the other role. Strain-based conflict refers to a situation where pressures in one role impair performance in the second role and behaviour-based conflict refers to an incompatibility of behaviours necessary for work and family roles. According to Buck, Lee, MacDermid and Smith (2000), time-based work family conflict is derived from the scarcity model which suggests that human energy exists in limited quantity.

Carlson et al. (2000) built on the theory developed by Greenhaus and Beutell and developed a scale to measure WFC. Although various instruments existed at the time, none of them were able to evaluate WFC inclusive of all its forms. The Carlson et al. (2000, p. 260) WFC scale comprises the following dimensions:

- time-based interference with family;
- time-based interference with work;
- strain-based interference with family;
- strain-based interference with work;
- behaviour-based work interference with family; and
- behaviour-based family interference with work.

For a more detailed discussion of the WFC scale, (see par 3.5).

From literature it is clear that WFC is not selective of its 'victims'; it affects both dual and single parents. The degree of effect however differs. For dual parents, having a partner with whom to share responsibilities, would lessen the experience of WFC. Single parents, however, carry the complete responsibility of work and family commitments on their own. Single parents are thus expected to experience more WFC compared to their dual-parent counterparts. This is expected to be even truer in the SANDF, as military work is characterised by abnormal working hours and long periods away from loved ones. According to Bourg and Segal (1999), the military should remedy this situation as it plays a significant role in controlling the conflicting demands between work and family. The military further determines whether soldiers operate under the expansion model (abundance of resources) or the scarcity model (limited resources) (see Author, date). WFC is expected to have a negative effect on single-parent work satisfaction.

The umbrella effect of WFC is negative in nature. A closer look reveals the different effects that participation in work have on family, and participation in family have on work. Family-to-work conflict leads to reduced energy, a reduced sense of control, less dedication, lower self-efficacy and less vigour. Work-to-family conflict leads to increased psychological distress (low wellbeing/mental health) as well as reduced life and job satisfaction (Ferguson, Carlson, Hunter, & Whitten, 2012).

WFC has been found to have a significant influence on work satisfaction. According to Porfeli and Mortimer (2010), the work satisfaction of individuals depends on their perception of the extent to which work can support their family rather than personal values or goals. In the same vein, Griggs, Caper and Eby (2013), Gogh et al. (2015), Mauno, Ruokolainen and Kinnunen (2015) found that supportive relationships – more specifically social support in the form of supervisor support – led to reduced WFC. Supervisor support led to an increased utilisation of family-friendly benefits without fear of negative consequences. Based on the social exchange theory (see par 2.5), individuals who experience little WFC due to organisation-based support reciprocate with increased commitment (Wayne, Casper, Matthews & Allen, 2013).

Cortese, Colombo and Ghislieri (2010) report that WFC plays a significant role in determining job satisfaction. In support of the aforementioned claims, Matthews,

Wayne and Ford (2014) are of the opinion that it is impossible for WFC to be related positively to work satisfaction. Matthews et al. (2014) found that WFC was negatively related to subjective wellbeing indicators. The indicators ranged from self-assessments of psychological health to satisfaction with work and life domains to affective reactions.

Due to the inherently demanding nature of the military, WFC can be said to be a negative factor towards the relationship between the military (unit) and the soldier's family. Kirkland and Katz (1989) allude to four points in the family and unit relationship which affect military combat readiness, namely –

- the complex nature of the soldier, family and military, which leads to each party affecting the other(s);
- families can positively contribute to unit readiness and combat effectiveness;
- the command climate in units determines the degree of support displayed by families; and
- building strong families enhances readiness in a cost-effective manner.

When the relationship between the family and the unit is positive, a soldier's life in the family allows him or her to function effectively in the unit and vice versa. When a soldier functions well, family stability and the performance level of the unit increase. When the unit and family are not in unison (high WFC), this affects the soldier negatively and affects his or her performance in both areas. An opposite of WFC in the family and unit relationship is a situation where there is positive integration between the two, which allows the soldier to devote his or her physical and mental energy towards the mission (Kirkland & Katz, 1989; Shinga, 2015).

The nature of the family and the unit plays a role in the family unit relationship. Kirkland and Katz (1989) differentiate between disruptive and effective families and call these 'unstable' and 'stable' families respectively. The authors describe unstable families as those families which are characterised by mistrust, poor communication and indifference. Stable families on the other hand are characterised by consideration for one another, confidence in one another and good relationships. When a soldier forms part of a stable family, this positive feeling is carried through to the work environment where he or she exhibits commitment, loyalty and focus. Single parents who form part of stable families can be expected to cope with the

demands and function effectively in the work environment as a result of the supportive nature of their families (Shinga, 2015).

Kirkland and Katz (1989) further distinguish between a well-integrated unit and a poorly integrated unit. Well-integrated units are described as such by good commanders who emphasise the three key points of military life, namely training, garrison preparation and personal and family activities. Poorly integrated units, on the other hand, are characterised by poor communication, indifference shown by seniors towards subordinates, manipulation of subordinates and acceptance of missions without assessing their influence on the family lives of subordinates. The emphasis of well-integrated units is on supportive leaders who aim to strike a balance between the soldier's family and the unit (Shinga, 2015).

The combination of stable families and well-integrated units leads to a positive spillover from the family to the work environment. This combination is the opposite of WFC and leads to its reduction. Supportive leaders will ensure there is little WFC, which can be expected to contribute to an increase of work satisfaction.

Supportive leaders provide an environment that leads to the wellbeing of all unit members. In terms of single parents, supportive commanders could ensure that there are sufficient and relevant resources to support their demands. When single parents have sufficient resources that increase their ability to cope with demands, it can be expected that they would give little thought to resigning from the organisation and they will be invested and committed.

2.7 WORK–FAMILY ENRICHMENT

The world of work has noticeably changed from what it was even in the recent past. This change reflects an increased number of single parents, women and dual-earner couples. Increasingly, work- or career-related decisions that individuals make are influenced progressively more by their family profiles/situations in combination with the way employment in particular organisations will influence their families (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012). If individuals are continually stressed about how they must balance the relationship between their work and family, they are unable to commit and be effective in both work and life. As an additive, employment characteristics, such as work hours and the quality of jobs, increase employee wellbeing and ultimately influence the work–family enrichment (WFE), experienced

by employees (Carvalho & Chambel, 2014; Cooklin et al., 2015; Hamid & Amin, 2014). Consequently, people will be likely to seek employment in family-supportive organisations rather than those that do not value the wellbeing of employees' families (Odle-Dusseau et al., 2013; Wayne et al., 2013; Wayne, Randel & Stevens, 2006).

Greenhaus and Powell (as cited in Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne & Grzywacz, 2006, p.132) define WFE as "the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life, namely performance or affect in the other role". Enrichment takes place when the resource gains in Role A directly or indirectly improve performance in Role B. WFE is the positive side of the mostly negative workfamily interface. It builds on the notion of positive spillover. To explain further, WFE occurs when resources, such as skills, perspectives, flexibility, physical and social capital and material resources generated in one domain improve the performance in the other domain or influence the psychological state or affect.

The distinction between WFC and WFE is that in WFC, experiences in one domain can be transferred (i.e. spill over) to the other role and not improve the quality of life or individual performance in the other role. The aforementioned is an illustration of the negative nature of WFC. Both Greenhaus and Powell (2006) and Gareis, Barnett, Ertel and Berkman (2009) emphasise that, in order for enrichment to occur, resources not only need to be transferred to another role but they must also be applied successfully in ways that result in improved performance or affect for the individual. For example, a male single parent could learn interpersonal skills at work and apply them at home with his teenage daughter. Being available, following the learned steps and making attempts to communicate successfully with his daughter will lead to improved communication between the two and a good relationship.

Theories that explain WFE suggest that employees' resources are not fixed or subject only to exhaustion, but they can actually be expanded. Their central premise is that investing resources (e.g. energy, time) in one domain may lead to an increase in resources (e.g. skills, resiliency) in another domain. For example, a soldier who is trained in effective strategies for prioritising and managing conflict at work may discover times when these same skills may be used and have a positive effect in his or her family.

WFE may be explained by the ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1986), which considers the work–family experience to be a joint function of process, person, context and time characteristics. An example of the joint function can be seen in the positive interaction between a stable family and a well-integrated unit whereby good functioning and experiences in one domain lead to good performance and functioning in the other. One's experience of work–family interaction is an outcome of the degree to which work and family interact, his or her personality, the context in which the interaction takes place and how he or she divide their time between the two domains and the extent to which their roles allow them to make such a division.

Single parents in the military are expected to have a different experience of the work–family interaction when compared to dual parents in the military in terms of the process, person characteristics, context of occurrence and time characteristics. These single parents can be expected to experience more WFC than dual parents because they are solely responsible for family-related responsibilities in addition to work-related ones unlike dual parents who are able to share responsibilities in response to work and family demands. Since WFE is the opposite of WFC, the expected increased experience of WFC for single parents led the researcher to question whether the same can be said for WFE. Based on the underpinning notion that WFE can only be achieved when an individual is present and can transfer learned skills in the receiving domain, can it be said that single parents would experience less WFE simply because they have no one to share responsibilities with and thus they unable to transfer and apply learned skills?

According to the theory, individuals have natural tendencies towards high levels of functioning and individual development results through ongoing interactions between the individual and his or her environment. Resources in the environment (work or family) will be the primary source of enrichment, as individuals will interact with their environment through these resources. The theory also suggests that there are certain demand characteristics (such as gender, personality and socio-economic status) that will influence the WFE process such that individual characteristics will interact with the environment to obtain more resources or obtain more benefits from available resources (Baral & Bhargava, 2011).

Resilience is one of the personal characteristics that could influence the WFE process. Bartone, Barry and Armstrong (2009) describe resilience as a set of

processes which enable good outcomes irrespective of serious threat. Resilience can be manifested through protective factors, such as optimism, hope, empathy, close relationships and impulse control. Loosely translated resilience refers to an individual's ability to bounce back from a negative experience. Core competencies that make up resilience are character strength, connection with others, mental agility, optimism, self-awareness and self-regulations. The ability to bounce back from various negative experiences in their work and life domains could possibly allow single parents to achieve WFE. For example, when a single parent experiences a negative encounter with his or her superior, the ability to bounce back (resilience) from that experience and to focus on the positives and to move forward will allow the single parent to learn interpersonal and communication skills from the encounter, which could then be applied in the home environment.

Greenhaus and Powell (2006) conceptualised WFE by utilising the role accumulation theory. Simply put, the role accumulation theory operates under the assumption that one's participation in one role improves your participation in another directly or indirectly. The theory highlights three key ways in which an individual's participation in multiple roles could bring positive returns:

- Firstly, work experiences and family experiences could contribute to individual wellbeing.
- Secondly, participating in both domains could protect individuals from stress experienced in one of the roles.
- Thirdly, the experiences that an individual gains in one role could yield positive experiences and outcomes in the other. This last mechanism is what Greenhaus and Powell (2006) utilised to theorise WFE, which led to the ultimate development of the WFE model (Figure 2.2 below).

As previously discussed (see par 2.2.3), single parents do not have a partner with whom to share responsibilities. This means that single parents have to be able to share their resources equally across their various demands. Through the role accumulation theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), single parents could collect additional resources, which would allow them to fulfil the demands inherent to their various roles. Supportive organisations could ensure increased WFE by continually creating opportunities for single parents to accumulate more resources. This could be done through the introduction of effective communication or time-management

workshops. When single parents accumulate more resources through the organisation, the principle of reciprocity is initiated and they become more loyal and committed to the organisation.

Basing their assumptions on this theory, Greenhaus and Powell (2006a, 2006b) developed five classes of resources that an individual could attain in one role, which would assist him or her to perform better in the other role, namely:

- social capital resources (e.g. networking information);
- physical and psychological resources (e.g. self-efficacy);
- material resources (e.g. money);
- flexibility (e.g. flexible work schedules); and
- skills and perspectives (e.g. coping or interpersonal skills) (Masuda, McNall, Allen, & Nicklin, 2012).

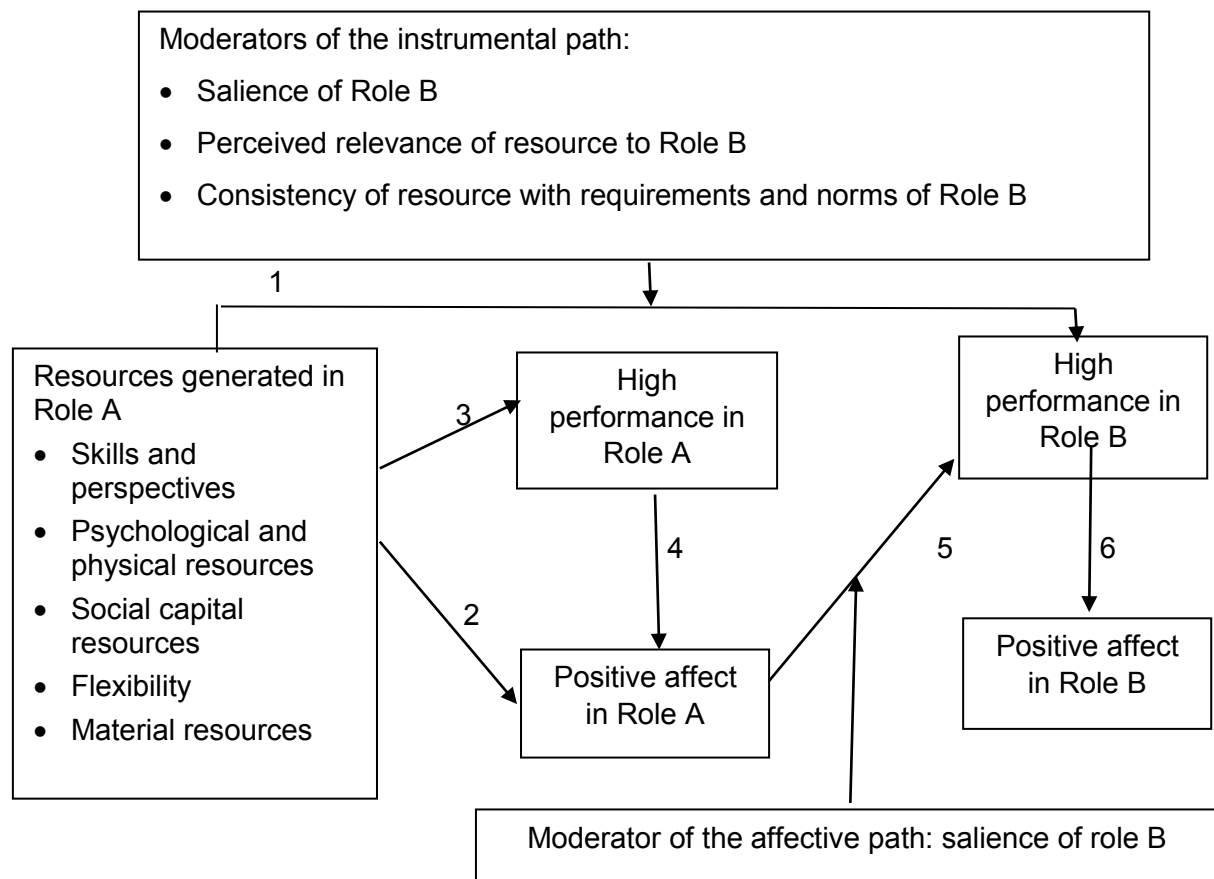


Figure 2.2. Model of work-family enrichment

(Greenhaus & Powell, 2006, p. 79)

For the purpose of their model, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) described a resource as an asset on which a person could draw when necessary. Figure 2.2 depicts previously mentioned resources that could possibly be generated in one's work or family role. The various examples of the WFE model resources may be seen throughout the discussion of WFE as a concept of this study. In Figure 2.2, Arrow 1 illustrates the direct (instrumental) manner in which the resources that an individual gains in Role A are transferred to Role B and lead to an increase in performance. Arrows 2 and 3 indicate the manner in which resources gained in Role A may be applied in Role B in order to achieve high performance by means of positive affect in two ways.

- Firstly, the positive emotions experienced in Role A (Arrow 4) could lead indirectly to high performance in Role B through the positive affect experienced in Role A.

- Secondly, the positive affect experienced in Role A (Arrow 5) could lead directly to increased performance in Role B. meaning that WFE ultimately leads to positive affect. Furthermore, it should be noted that positive affect has been documented as a component of work satisfaction. Based on this, one can predict a positive relationship between WFE and work satisfaction.

Carlson et al. (2006) developed the work–family enrichment scale. In their development of the scale, the researchers saw WFE as multi-dimensional and that it includes multiple possible resource gains, which could lead to higher benefits for the work and family domains. Following continuous analysis and conceptualisation, the final WFE scale consists of six dimensions. The final dimensions reflect key resources from which the work and family domain could benefit in order to make the interaction between work and family a more positive one. The scale is discussed in detail (see par 3.5.4). The first three dimensions (i.e. family-to-work development, family-to-work affect and family-to-work efficiency) evaluate family-to-work enrichment whilst the last three (i.e. work-to-family development, work-to-family affect and work-to-family capital) evaluate work-to-family enrichment. The six dimensions are briefly discussed below:

For the family-to-work direction (enrichment), the following dimensions (resources) were developed (Carlson et al., 2006, p. 140):

◆ Family-to-work development

Explains instances where the involvement of an individual in his or her family results in the attainment of behaviours, skills, knowledge or new ways of viewing things, which result in the individual becoming an improved worker.

◆ Family-to-work affect

Occurs when an individual's involvement in his or her family leads to a positive emotional state, which leads to him or her being a better worker.

◆ Family–work efficiency

As a dimension of WFE, family–work efficiency explains the situation where an individual's participation in the family domain provides him or her with a significant degree of focus, which results in him or her being a better worker.

The work-to-family direction (enrichment) consists of the following dimensions (resources) (Carlson et al., 2006, p. 140):

- ◆ Work–family development

Work–family development is described as an individual's involvement in work, which results in him or her attaining behaviours, skills, alternate ways of viewing things or knowledge which assists his participation in the family domain.

- ◆ Work-to-family affect

Explains an enrichment scenario where an individual's involvement in work results in a positive emotional state, which leads to him or her being a better family member.

- ◆ Work-to-family capital

Work–family capital explains a situation where a person's involvement in their work leads to higher levels of psychological resources such as self-fulfilment, confidence, security and accomplishment which contribute towards an individual being a better family member.

As WFE suggests that participation in one role enhances performance in another, it would seem that single-parent participation in the military would enhance their performance in the family and vice versa. Thus, high levels of WFE would have a positive influence on single parents and the challenges they come across.

The majority of literature explains WFE as a positive construct (Carlson, Hunter, Ferguson, & Whitten, 2011; McNall, Nicklin & Masuda, 2010; Wayne, Casper, Matthews & Allen [as cited in Akram, Malik, Nadeem & Atta, 2014]), meaning it has an empowerment quality within it or it can be utilised by organisations to decrease conflict at the work and family interface (Baral & Bhargava, 2010; Cook, 2009; Grzywacz, 2010; Powell, 2006). Hunter, Perry, Carlson and Smith (2010) evaluated the practicality of applying WFE in team-based organisations. The results indicated that WFE could be successfully applied in organisations and individuals who work in teams benefited from WFE. Employees who operated in teams were found to benefit from both work-to-family enrichment and family-to-work enrichment. Furthermore, WFE was found to be a mediator in the relationship between team resources and satisfaction. Such findings allow one to make an assumption that WFE could be

successfully applied in the military, more specifically the SANDF, and could have a positive effect on the satisfaction and wellbeing of single parents.

As WFE is an empowering construct, it is not surprising that a positive relationship between WFE and work outcomes has already been established in past research. Wayne et al. (as cited in Akram et al., 2014) established a positive relationship between WFE and job satisfaction, which is a facet of work satisfaction (see par 2.4.2). Corroborating results were also found between WFE and job satisfaction (Carlson et al., 2011). In their study, Carlson et al. (2011) further found that although positive, the relationship between WFE and job satisfaction was stronger in the originating than receiving domain. Similar results were found in a study that evaluated burnout and the work–family interface (Daniel & Sonnentag, 2016; Robinson, Magee & Caputi, 2016).

Similarly, a positive relationship also exists between WFE and family outcomes. O'Brien, Ganginis Del Pino, Yoo, Cinamon and Han (2014) found a positive relationship between positive behaviour or attitudes and outcomes in the family as a result of flexible and supportive work arrangements. Supportive work arrangements can be found in well-integrated units whereby the commanders focus on maintaining a balance between work and family demands for the soldier (Shinga, 2015).

According to Gareis et al. (2009), one of the most important roles that WFE plays in individual lives is that it is a buffer against WFC. The availability of WFE ensures that there is a harmonious relationship between the demands placed on an individual by his or her family and the demands placed on him or her by work. Following this observation, it is justifiable to say that WFC harms both the individual and his or her work, and an introduction or increment in WFE would benefit both work and family.

The effect that WFE has on parenting is notable. Resources that a parent acquires in his or her work domain could positively influence relevant parenting behaviours in the work domain. For example, if a parent learns multitasking in the work environment, he or she could apply it in the work domain by completing home-related tasks while simultaneously spending time with children. To corroborate this view, Cooklin et al. (2014, 2014, 2015) found a positive correlation between WFE and parenting warmth and consistency.

WFE has a significant effect on the workplace. This notion is supported by Russo and Buonocore (2012), who report that WFE is positively associated with work-related, health-related and family-related outcomes. Furthermore, researchers have established a positive relationship between support and WFE. Additionally, a positive relationship was found between family support and both directions of WFE. The researchers further found that employee gender influenced the level of WFE, namely that women experienced more WFE in family supportive organisations than men (Baral & Bhargava, 2011; Siu et al., 2010; Tang, Siu & Cheng, 2014).

WFE can be a valuable resource to empower single parents, especially those in the military. In most cases, the relationship between the military and the family is characterised by WFC. Having a resource that balances the scales in this relationship could go a long way in maintaining positive interaction between the two. When single parents transfer skills learned in one domain to the other, this creates a level of understanding and appreciation between the domains. As WFE has been linked to work-related outcomes, which constitute work satisfaction, it can be expected that the more WFE single parents achieve, the higher the likelihood that their work satisfaction will increase. WFE can thus be expected to be an influential factor towards work satisfaction.

2.8 CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CONSTRUCTS

Work satisfaction explains a person's cognitive appraisal of his or her wellbeing, mental health and satisfaction with his or her career. As a reflection of wellbeing and mental health in the workplace, work satisfaction is characterised by person–environment fit, and is largely influenced by the profile of employee families. Single parents are continuously faced with challenges in both the work and life domains. In order for single parents to respond successfully to challenges and to experience work satisfaction, the work environment and family need to be supportive of one another and the person (Daniel & Sonnentag, 2016; Garels et al., 2009; Robinson, Magee & Caputi, 2016).

All soldiers are constantly faced with stress that emanates from work and home. To add to this, the military is a naturally demanding and stressful environment. Single-parent soldiers are forced to deal with additional stress from their responsibilities,

which is aggravated by the inherent military stress. An individual who is constantly under stress and does not have additional resources will likely succumb to that pressure. This may be seen in the form of withdrawal, negative health-related outcomes or even resignation from work. In order for single parents to deal with stress, they need to have sufficient resources. One of the resources that can be utilised in dealing with stress is social support.

Social support has been identified as a supportive construct. Social support can be offered in various ways depending on the needs of the receiver. Furthermore, social support may be provided by various sources such as peers, a supervisor, a co-worker, the organisation, one's family, and the support may even be provided simultaneously. Social support is an important element for the military due to inherent challenges such as being away from loved ones. When an individual has sufficient support, he or she is effective in both domains, which leads to wellbeing and satisfaction, and such person is unlikely to resign from work (Kossek, Pichler, Bodner & Hammer, 2011; Lapierre & Allen, 2006).

WFC explains the negative relationship between the work and life domain, which occurs when demands in one role inhibit successful participation in another. Due to its greedy nature, the military perpetuates WFC. Because of the demands that the military places on its members, soldiers find themselves spending less and less time with their loved ones. WFC is worse for single parents in the military as they do not have a partner with whom to share family-related burdens or responsibilities. In most cases, single parents are forced to choose between work and family, and they ultimately resign so they can take care for their families (Boles, Johnston & Hair, 1997; Carr, Boyar, & Gregory, 2008; Karatepe & Kilic, 2007).

On the positive side of the work–family interface, WFE allows individuals to apply resources learned in one domain to another domain. WFE, by its nature, is the opposite of WFC and leads to increased wellbeing and satisfaction for both the soldier and his or her family. WFE has been identified as a determining instrument for turnover, job satisfaction and positive health-related outcomes.

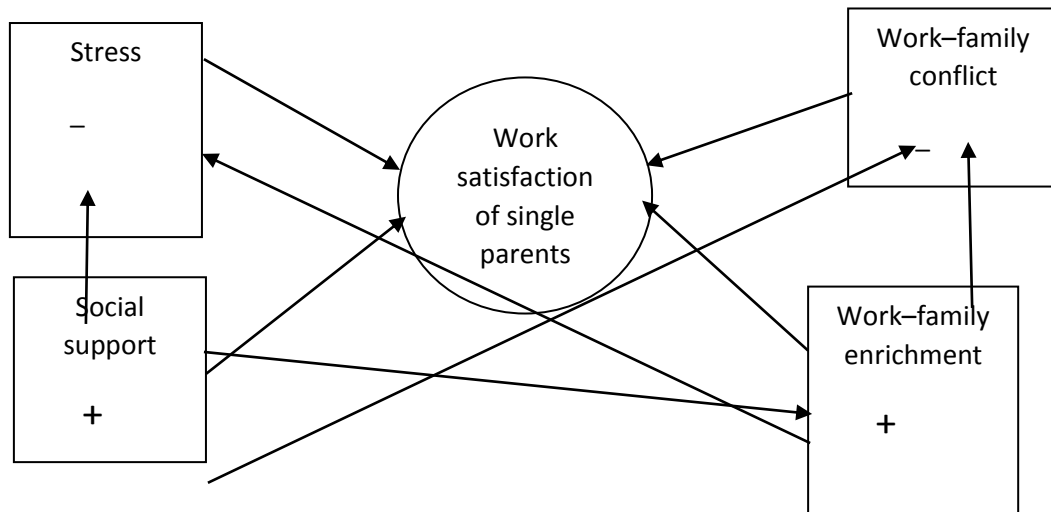


Figure 2.3. Proposed model of work satisfaction for single parents in the SANDF

According to literature, the challenges (constructs) that single parents come across on a daily basis have the potential to influence their work satisfaction. Furthermore, the constructs have the potential to influence one another. As proposed in Figure 1.1, i.e. the conceptualised model of the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF, factors such as stress, social support, WFE and WFC have the potential to influence work satisfaction of single parents.

2.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed a number of facets theorised to influence work satisfaction. In doing so, the chapter first reported on literature on single-parent families in the civilian and military environments with the aim of highlighting challenges that they often come across. The chapter further provided an in-depth literature review of work satisfaction and the factors that could possibly influence it. The last theoretical discussion in the chapter focused on describing the hypothesised interaction between the factors (see Fig. 1.1) and as such, a model was proposed (see Fig. 2.3).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

“If we knew what it was we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?”

(Einstein as cited in O’Leary, 2013, p. 1)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The overall objective for this study was to determine factors that influence the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF. This objective was achieved through these theoretical objectives: the conceptualisation of work satisfaction from a theoretical perspective, the conceptualisation of stress from a theoretical perspective, the conceptualisation of social support from a theoretical perspective, the conceptualisation of WFC from a theoretical perspective, the conceptualisation of WFE from a theoretical perspective, and the conceptualisation of the theoretical relationships between stress, social support, WFC, WFE and work satisfaction. The theoretical objectives lead to the development of a theoretical model for the study (see Fig. 1.1).

The theoretical background and framework informed the following empirical objectives, namely to determine:

- ◆ the level of stress in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- ◆ the level of social support in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- ◆ the level of WFC in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- ◆ the level of WFE in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- ◆ the level of work satisfaction in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- ◆ the relationship between stress, social support, WFC, WFE and work satisfaction in a sample of SANDF single parents;
- ◆ the level of stress between single and dual parents in the SANDF;
- ◆ the level of social support between single and dual parents in the SANDF;
- ◆ the level of WFC between single and dual parents in the SANDF;
- ◆ the level of WFE between single and dual parents in the SANDF and
- ◆ the level of work satisfaction between single and dual parents in the SANDF.

The literature review conducted in Chapter 2 provided the theoretical framework and grounds for the researcher to formulate hypotheses for the present study. The

hypotheses were in line with the study objectives. This chapter presents the hypotheses, the research design, sampling design, measuring instruments as well as statistical analysis for the study. Prior to undertaking a detailed discussion, it is important for the author to provide an understanding of what research is and how/why it is carried out.

O'Leary (2013) describes research as the process of developing new knowledge by gathering data with the intention of answering a particular research question. The research process comprises the following steps: formulation of testable hypotheses, designing of the study, collection of data, analysis of data, and the drawing of conclusions (O'Leary, 2013). According to Kothari (2004, p. 8), research methodology can be defined as –

[...] considers the logic behind the methods we use in the context of our research study and explain why we are using a particular method or technique and why we are not using others so that research results are capable of being evaluated either by the researcher himself or by others.

Durrheim (2006) describes a research design as a strategic framework for action, which one uses as a bridge between research questions and the carrying out of research.

The present study utilised both the deductive and inductive methods of research. Deductive theory is a representation of the most common view of a particular domain where a researcher relies on what is already known and utilises this theoretical knowledge to develop hypotheses that must be empirically tested (Bryman, 2016). Embedded in the deductive process are five steps, which should be followed when conducting research. The steps, which formed the basis of the present study, are: theory, hypothesis, data collection, findings, hypothesis confirmed or rejected, and revision of theory (Bryman, 2016). Following the testing of the hypotheses, the researcher engaged in induction where implications of the findings were inferred to the theory from which the study was initiated.

3.2 HYPOTHESES

The literature review conducted in Chapter 2 highlighted the significance of stress, social support, WFC and WFE on work satisfaction of single parents. Out of this review arose the need to investigate how these factors may influence the work

satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF. Theorising military families and the challenges that single parents face (see par 2.1), the study intended to provide a theoretical framework that would allow for the conceptualisation of stress, social support, WFC, WFE and work satisfaction.

One of the study intentions was to investigate the empirical relationship between the independent and dependent variables of interest. Brown (1988, p. 10) defines a dependent variable as one that “determines what effect if any, the other types of variables may have on it”, and goes on to define an independent variable as one that is “selected by the researcher to determine their effect on or relationship with the dependent variable”. In order to fulfil the study objectives, the following hypotheses were developed to investigate the hypothesised relationship between the independent and dependent variables (see Fig. 1.1).

H1: Single parents experience significantly higher levels of stress than dual parents

H2: Single parents experience significantly lower levels of social support than dual parents

H3: Single parents experience significantly higher levels of WFC than dual parents

H4: Single parents experience significantly lower levels of WFE than dual parents

H5: Single parents experience significantly lower levels of work satisfaction than dual parents

H6: There is a significant relationship between social support and stress

H7: There is a significant relationship between stress and work satisfaction

H8: There is a significant relationship between social support and stress

H8: There is a significant relationship between social support and WFC

H9: There is a significant relationship between social support and WFE

H10: There is a significant relationship between social support and work satisfaction

H11: There is a significant relationship between WFC and work satisfaction

H12: There is a significant relationship between WFE and WFC

H13: There is a significant relationship between WFE and stress

H14: There is a significant relationship between WFE and work satisfaction

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research can be descriptive, analytical, applied, fundamental, qualitative or quantitative (Kothari, 2004). The quantitative research method was followed for this study. Aliaga and Gunderson (as cited in Muijs, 2004, p. 1) define quantitative research as “explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics)”.

Babbie and Mouton (2012, p. 74) define a research design as “a plan or blue print of how you intend conducting the research”. On a similar line of thought, a research design can be described as a strategic framework for action, which one uses as a bridge between research questions and the carrying out of research (Durrheim, 2006). The crux of these two descriptions is that a research design is a detailed explanation of how a researcher intends to test developed hypotheses in order to accept or reject them.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2012), there are three points of difference between a research design and research methodology, namely:

- a research design focuses on the end product, which will be guided by the type of study conducted;
- a research design applies a research question or problem as a point of departure; and
- a research design focuses on the logic of research, i.e. the type of evidence one requires to address the research question.

The research design adopted for this study was non-experimental in nature. Coetzee and Schreuder (2010) describe a non-experimental research design as the type of research where the aim is to provide an accurate description of a particular variable.

For the purpose of this study, the exploratory research method was applied. The exploratory method allowed for the adoption of the *ex post facto* strategy (design). The *ex post facto* strategy, also known as the correlational method (Heiman, 1995), restricts manipulation of the independent variable.

Babbie (2010) remarks that an *ex post facto* strategy allows the researcher to observe an empirical relationship between two variables (i.e. independent and dependent) and suggest a cause for the observed relationship. The dependent

variable for this study was work satisfaction. There were four independent variables for the study, namely stress, social support, WFC and WFE.

3.4 SAMPLING DESIGN

Babbie and Mouton (2012, p. 146) define sampling as “the process of selecting observations”. A sampling design may be understood as the method chosen to select the sample from the overall population. This involves selecting a sample according to criteria that are relevant to your study, such as settings, behaviours and/or events (Calder, n.d.; Durrheim, 2006). Babbie and Mouton (2012, p. 174) define a study population as “that aggregation of elements from which the sample is actually selected”. This population allows the researcher to make conclusions. For the present study, the study population consisted of parents in the SANDF who were divided into single and dual parents. The inclusion of dual parents was intended to indicate whether there were significant differences in the levels of stress, social support, WFC, WFE and work satisfaction for single and dual parents in the SANDF. In line with the identified research gap, the research focused on single parents.

By way of the convenient sampling method, a total sample of 200 (101 single parents and 99 dual parents) was selected from 2 Field Engineer Regiment, School of Engineers, 35 Engineer Support Regiment and 1 Construction Regiments. Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) say that convenience sampling, also referred to as haphazard sampling is a type of non-probability or non-random sampling where individuals who meet a particular practical criterion are included in the sample. Such criteria could range from availability to willingness to participate. Although the convenient sampling method lends itself to vulnerabilities such as bias, its advantages outweigh the disadvantages. The method has advantages such as affordability, practicality as well as availability of participants (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). The criteria applied for this thesis were suitability, availability and willingness to participate.

3.5 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

In order to measure the relationship between the dependent variable (i.e. work satisfaction) and independent variables (i.e. stress, social support, WFC and WFE), the following instruments were utilised:

- stress was measured using the PSS10 (Cohen et al. 1983);

- social support was measured by the MOS survey (Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991);
- WFC was measured using the WFC scale (Carlson et al., 2000);
- WFE was measured using the WFE scale (Carlson et al., 2006); and
- work satisfaction was measured using the SWWS (Bérubé et al., 2007).

The various scales make use of a Likert-type scale measurement method. Babbie and Mouton (2012) describe Likert-type scaling as the unambiguous ordinality of response categories used in questionnaires.

3.5.1 Perceived stress survey 10 (PSS10)

Lazarus and Folkman (1986, p. 63) define stress as “a relationship with the environment that the person appraises as significant for his or her well-being and in which the demands tax or exceed coping resources”. PSS10 indicates the degree to which one appraises his or her life situations as stressful (Cohen et al., 1983).

The survey consists of 10 items. Items were designed to indicate the extent to which respondents find their lives to be overloaded, unpredictable and uncontrollable. Each item is rated on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from ‘never’ (0) to ‘almost always’ (4). Positively worded items (items 4, 5, 7, & 8) are reverse-scored, and the ratings are summed, with high scores indicating high levels of perceived stress (Cohen et al. 1983). Questions in the scale were designed in a general manner, which means that they are free of content that is only applicable to a specific subpopulation. This allows the scale to be applicable to any population within any work environment. The survey has reported alpha and test–retest coefficients of .85 (Myers, 2004).

3.5.2 Medical Outcomes Study Social Support Survey (MOS-SSS)

Cobb (as cited in Overdale & Gardner 2012, p. 313) defines social support as “information leading a person to believe that they are cared for and loved, esteemed and valued and integrated within network of communication and mutual obligation”. The MOS-SSS is a self-report measure that consists of 20 items. Development of the scale was guided by the most important dimensions of support as found in social support theories.

The scale was developed to illustrate the most functional dimensions of social support, namely emotional/informational support, tangible support, affectionate support and positive social interaction. Items are measured on a five-point Likert-type scale which ranges from 'none of the time' (1) to 'all of the time' (5). The survey has an overall reliability of above .90 (Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991).

3.5.3 Work–family conflict scale (WFC scale)

Greenhouse and Beutell (1985, p. 77) define WFC as “a form of interrole conflict in which role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect”. The scale captures the bidirectional conflicting relationship between work and family (Carlson et al., 2000), which is indicative of the influence that work has on the family and vice versa. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) conceptualised the WFC on the basis of resource conflict. WFC may be divided into three main forms of conflict, i.e. time-based, strain-based and behaviour-based conflicts.

The WFC scale is a self-report measure consisting of 18 items assessing the six conceptually and empirically distinct dimensions (Carlson et al., 2000). The scale comprises the following dimensions:

- time-based interference with family;
- time-based interference with work;
- strain-based interference with family;
- strain-based interference with work;
- behaviour-based work interference with family; and
- behaviour-based family interference with work.

Responses to all items are made on five-point Likert-type scales (1= 'strongly disagree' to 5 = 'strongly agree').

The internal consistency of each of the six dimensions was estimated with Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The reliabilities for each of the six dimensions exceed the conventional .70 level of acceptance:

- time-based WIF (work interference to family) (WIF) = .89;
- time-based FIW (family Interference to work) (FIW) = .94;
- strain-based WIF = .93;
- strain-based FIW = .92;
- behaviour-based WIF =.94; and

- behaviour-based FIW = .93 (Lim et al., 2010).

The overall scale exceeds .75 alpha coefficient (Carlson et al., 2000).

3.5.4 Work–Family Enrichment Scale (WFE scale)

Greenhaus and Powell (as cited in Carlson et al., 2006, p. 132) define WFE as “the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life, namely performance or affect in the other role”. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) conceptualised WFE by utilising the role accumulation theory. Carlson et al. (2006) developed the WFE scale. In their development of the scale, the researchers saw WFE as multi-dimensional and they therefore included multiple possible resource gains, which could lead to higher benefits for the work and family domains. The scale is made up of the following dimensions:

- work-to-family development;
- work-to-family affect;
- work-to-family capital;
- family-to-work development;
- family-to-work affect; and
- family-to-work efficiency.

The WFE scale is a self-report measure; which consists of 18 items and six dimensions measured on a five-point Likert-type scale (1= ‘strongly disagree’ to 5 = ‘strongly agree’) (Carlson et al., 2006). The internal consistency of each of the six dimensions was estimated using alpha coefficients. The reliabilities exceeded the conventional level of acceptance of .70 –

- work-to-family development = .73;
- work-to-family affect = .91;
- work-to-family capital = .90;
- family-to-work development = .87;
- family-to-work affect = .84;
- family-to-work efficiency = .82 and
- the full scale = .92 (Carlson et al., 2006).

3.5.5 Satisfaction With Work Scale (SWWS)

Work satisfaction is defined as “the cognitive appraisal of a person’s work situation or a person’s well-being in the work context” (Bérubé et al., 2007, p. 273). Bérubé et al. (2007) conceptualised work satisfaction by combining theories of wellbeing (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffith, 1985) with theories of psychological variables, such as subjective and cognitive wellbeing.

The SWWS can be evaluated within any organisational context and indicates an individual’s satisfaction with his or her career. The scale further indicates the extent to which people are involved in their work and the degree to which people intend to leave the organisation. The SWWS consists of five items (Bérubé et al., 2007). It was adapted from the satisfaction with life scale (SWLS). During validation, its test–retest reliability was .75 (Bérubé et al., 2007). The scale uses a seven-point Likert-type scale of 1 (‘strongly disagree’) to 7 (‘strongly agree’).

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

Prior to commencing with data collection, ethics clearance was obtained from the Stellenbosch University ethics bodies i.e. the Departmental Ethics Screening Committee (DESC) and Research Ethics Committee (REC). Permission was also sought from and granted by the General Officer Commanding of the South African Army Engineer Corps as well as the General Officer Commanding Defence Intelligence. Before data was collected, the purpose of the research was explained to participants and included explanation of the confidentiality of participation.

Participants were informed that participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any point without any negative consequences. Participants were requested to complete a consent form which indicated their informed willingness to participate in the study. The duration of completing the questionnaire (maximum 60 minutes) was explained to participants beforehand. All ethical requirements as stipulated by the DESC, REC and the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) were followed strictly.

The collection of data took place in the morning in slots identified by various officers commanding of the units. Data was collected by means of a paper-and-pencil survey. Following the provision of written consent by the participants, the questionnaires were distributed for completion.

3.7 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

STATISTICA 12 and partial least squares (PLS) with the software SAMRT PLS 2 were used to analyse the data. A 5% significance level ($p < 0.05$) was used as a guideline for determining significant relationships (Medeiros, Otuki, Avellar, & Calixto, 2007).

Descriptive statistics for the various factors and the sample were calculated to provide an overview of the sample. Reliability analysis was done for each scale using Cronbach's alpha. Babbie and Mouton (2012) describe reliability as a matter of whether a particular method would yield similar results if applied repeatedly. Analysis of variance was used to test differences between single and dual parents in terms of how they experienced different factors. Correlation analysis was conducted to test the relationships between variables as well as the hypotheses. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman correlation, which indicates a non-parametric value of the agreement between two variables. PLS was utilised in modelling the multi-variate relationships, which explain work satisfaction.

3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented a discussion on how the empirical testing was done. The hypotheses were also discussed. The research methodology was presented, which included the research design, sample and measuring instruments. The statistical analysis was also discussed. The next chapter (Chapter 4) provides the empirical results of the study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The various statistical analyses conducted on the collected raw data are presented in this chapter. The results will be presented in the following manner: firstly, descriptive statistics; secondly, reliability of the various measures; thirdly, inferential statistics through Spearman correlation; fourthly, PLS analysis results are presented, which will provide the measurement and structural model results. Finally, conclusions are drawn based on the results.

4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Rosnow and Rosenthal (2008) explain descriptive statistics as illustrations of variability for a complete population of events or scores. Descriptive statistics are further defined by Gravetter and Wallnau (2011, p. 6) as “statistical procedures used to summarize, organize and simplify data”. Descriptive statistics further transform raw data into a more manageable form. This form may consist of tables that allow the entire set of scores to be viewed or the computed average, distribution frequencies, measures of central tendency, and measures of position (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011; Rosnow & Rosenthal, 2008).

Measures of central tendency were calculated with the intent to illustrate general tendencies which the participants portrayed towards the independent and dependent variables. The measure of central tendency indicates the summary averages of the study data (Babbie & Mouton, 2012). This indicates the general tendencies of participants in relation to the independent and dependent variables. According to Gravetter and Wallnau (2011, p. 59), central tendency is a “statistical measure to determine a single score that defines the centre of a distribution. The goal of central tendency is to find the single score that is most typical or most representative of the entire group”.

A mean can be described as a measure of central tendency, which represents the value allocated to each participant if the sum is divided equally among all members of the sample (Watier, Lamontagne, & Chartier, 2011). Gravetter and Wallnau (2011) describe a standard deviation (SD) as a measure of the average or standard distance from the mean, which describes whether scores are widely scattered or

clustered closely around the mean. The sample comprised 200 male and female participants (see Fig. 4.1), representing different racial groups (see Fig. 4.2), of different age groups (see Fig. 4.3), who were all parents (see Fig. 4.4), divided into single and dual parents (see Fig. 4.5). The participants had to indicate whether they perceived the military as a suitable career for them as parents (see Fig. 4.6). The participants comprised of a larger number of males 145(73%) than females 55(28%) (see Fig. 4.1).

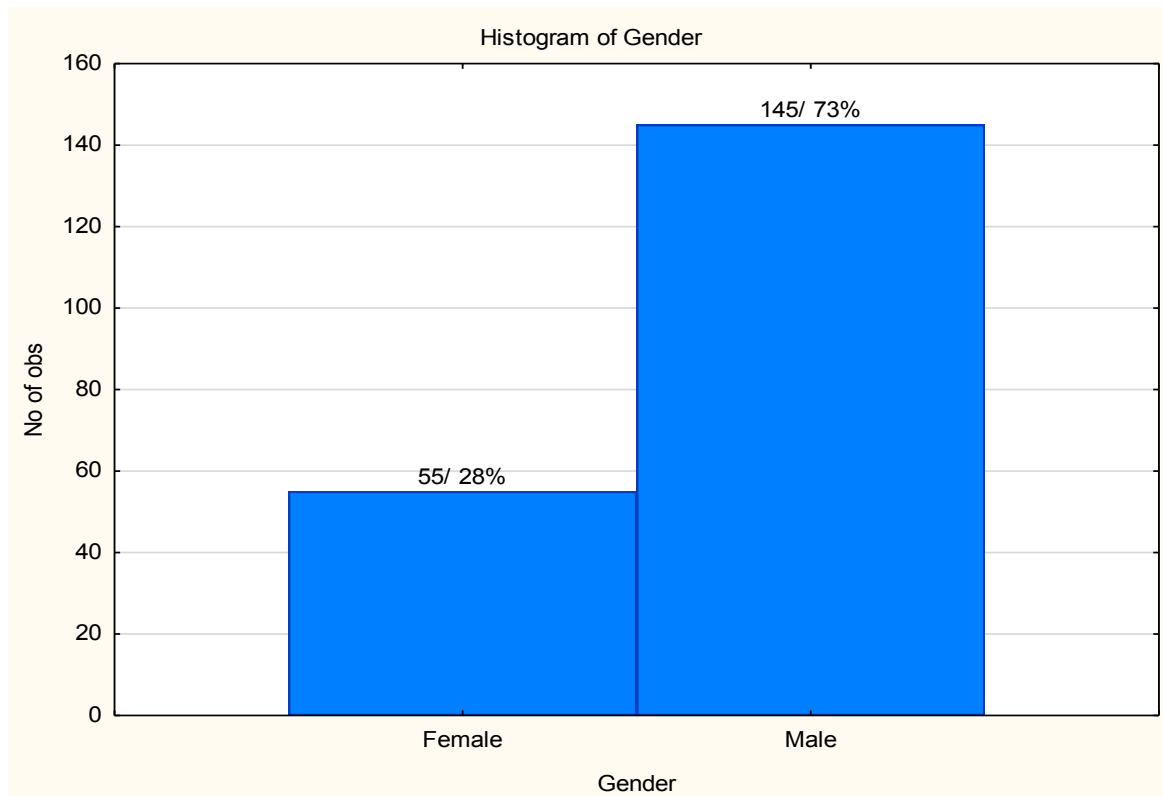


Figure 4.1 Histogram of gender

All languages except Isiswati were represented. The majority of participants spoke Zulu (47; 24%) whilst the minority spoke Ndebele 2 (1%). All racial groups (African, Asian/Indian, coloured and white) were represented in the sample (see Fig. 4.2), albeit not in equal proportions. The sample consisted of a majority of Africans (170 or 85%), followed by 22 (11%) coloureds, 7 (3.5%) whites and 1 (0.5%) Asian/Indian.

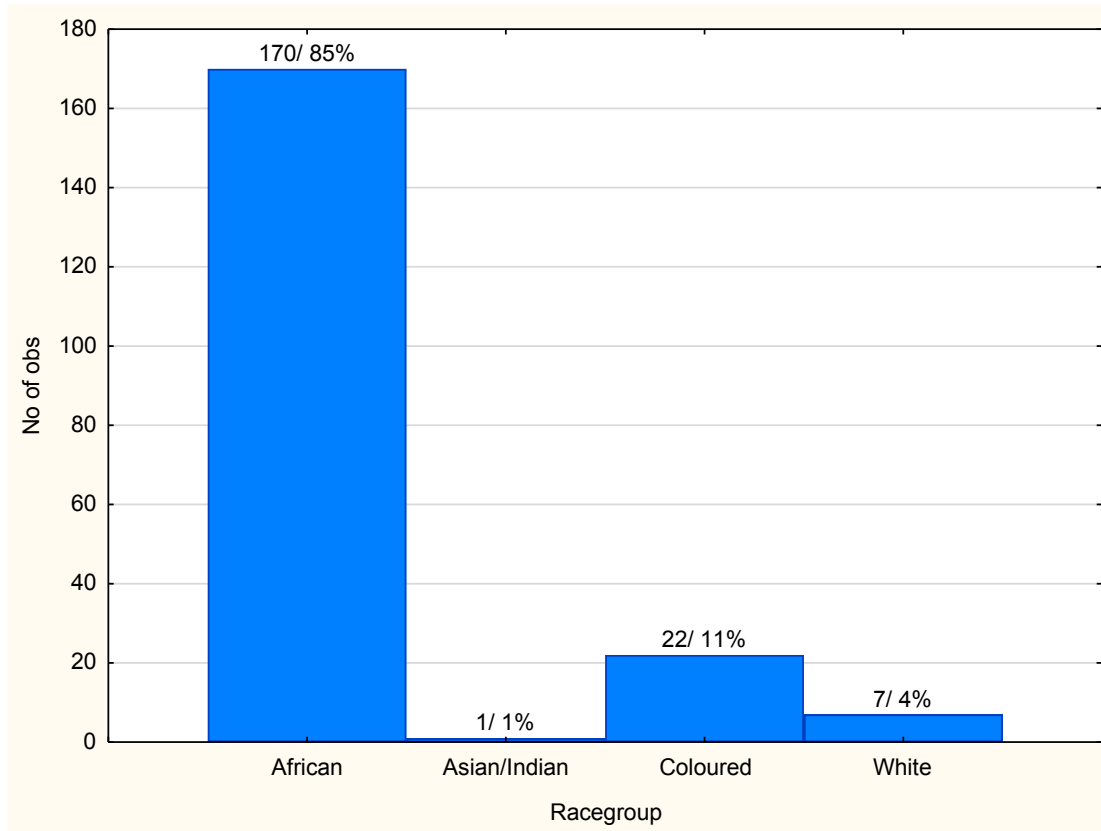


Figure 4.2 Histogram of race group

The participants were representative of various age groups ranging from 24 years and younger to 45 years and older (see Fig. 4.3). Participants' ages were distributed as follows: 103 (51.5%) in the group 25 to 35 years; 46 (23%) in the group 45 years and older; 36 (18%) in group 35 to 44 years; and 15 (7.5%) in the group 24 years or younger.

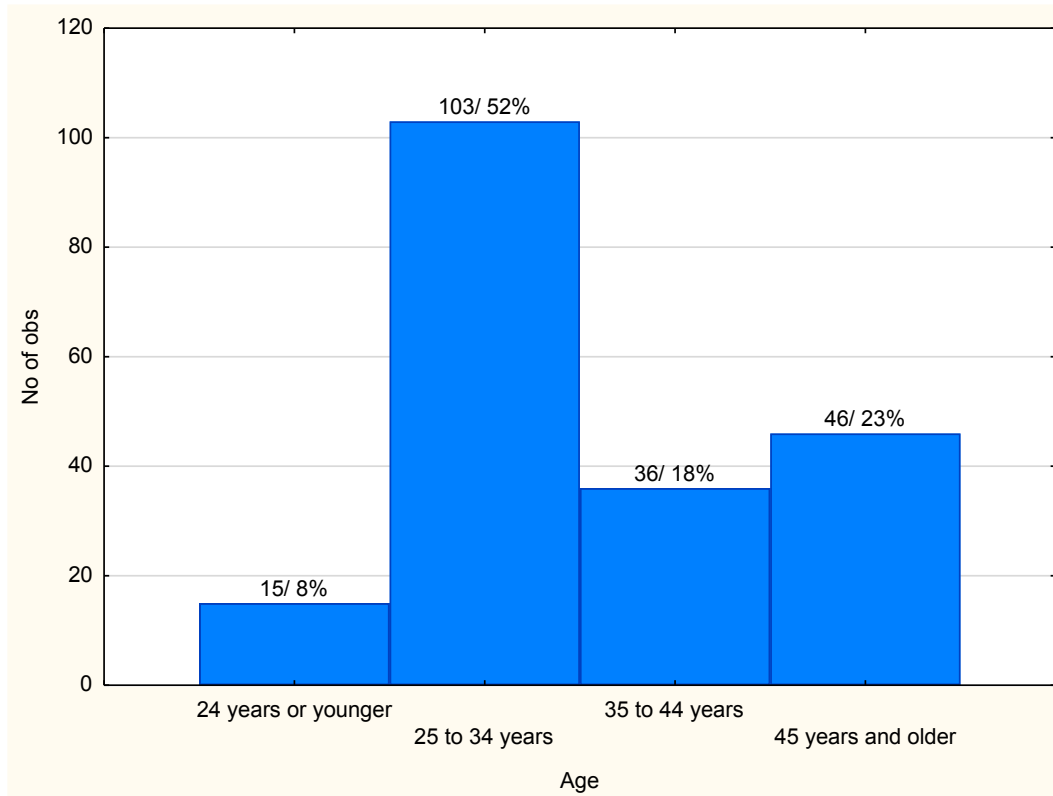


Figure 4.3 Histogram of age

All the participants included for this study were parents. The parents were all either single or dual parents (see Fig. 4.4). Of the participants, 101 (51%) were single parents whilst 99 (50%) were dual parents.

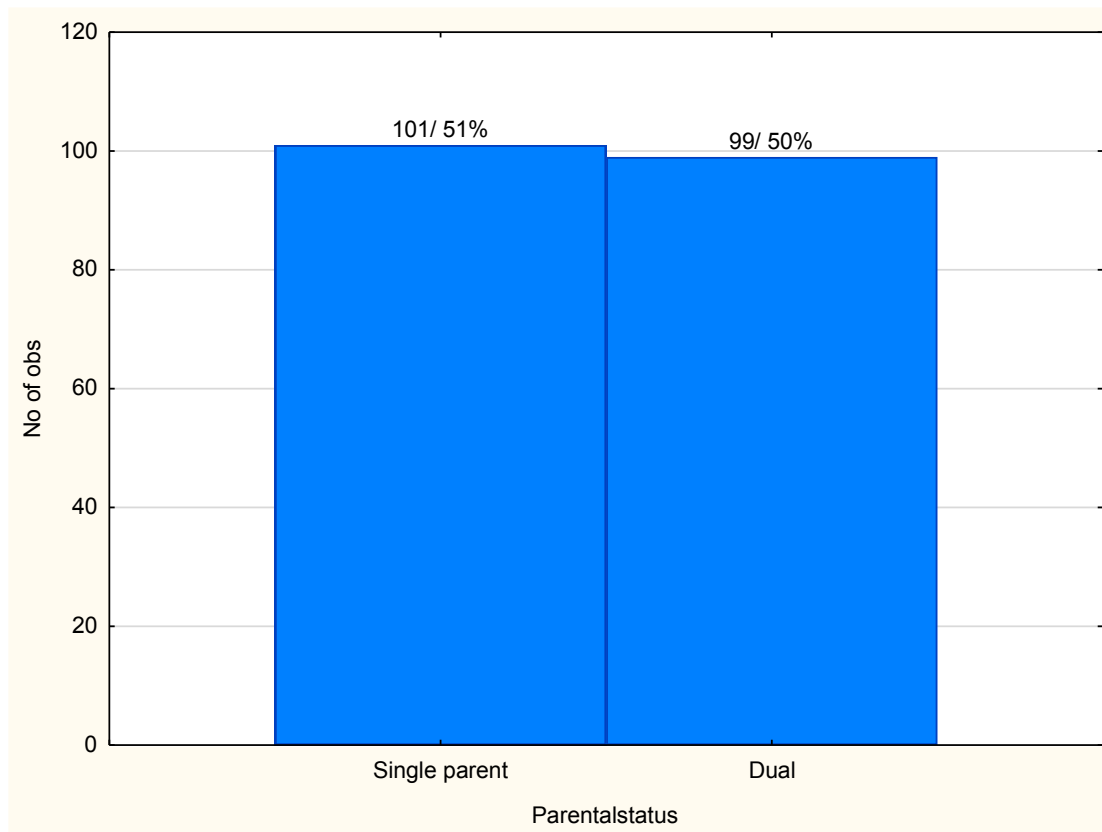


Figure 4.4 Histogram of parental status

The participants were categorised based on their rank groups, which ranged from Private/Sapper to Colonel. The largest group were the rank Private/Sapper 93(47%) and the smallest group was 1 Major (1(1%). When asked whether the military was a suitable career choice for the parents (see Fig. 4.5), more than three quarters of the participants 169(85%) said yes, whilst 28(14%) said no.

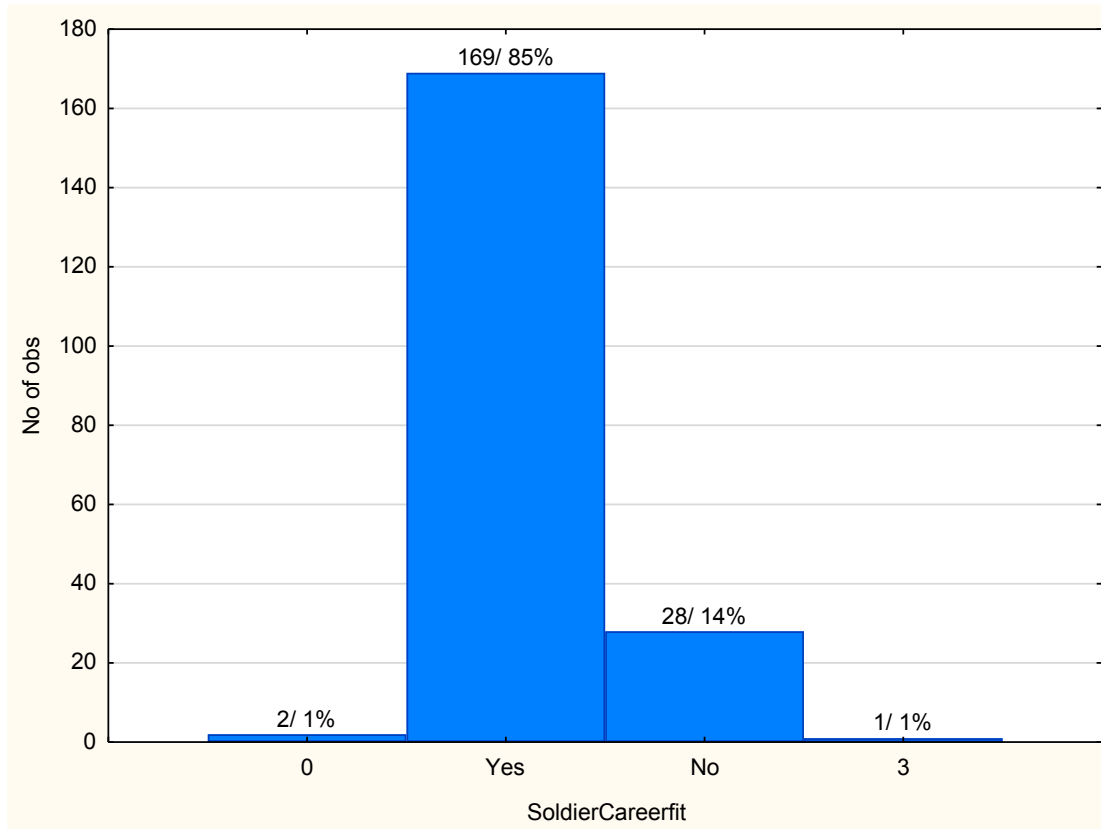


Figure 4.5 Histogram of soldier career fit

In order to determine whether there was a relationship between the variables of interest, the measures of central tendency were conducted. A total of five variables were investigated by using the following: stress – calculated using the PSS10 with 10 items to which participants had to indicate their level of agreement using a four-point Likert-type scale; social support – calculated using the MOS-SSS with 20 items to which participants responded on a five-point Likert-type scale; WFC – calculated using the WFC scale with 18 items where agreement was measured on a five-point Likert-type scale; WFE – calculated using the WFE scale with 18 items where agreement was measured on a five-point Likert-type scale; and work satisfaction – calculated using the SWWS with 5 items to which respondents had to indicate their level of agreement using a seven-point Likert-type scale.

Table 4.1***Measures of central tendency***

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CPSS	101	.00	3.20	1.91	.65
CWFC	101	1.00	4.06	2.40	.59
CMOS	101	1.19	6.95	3.70	.88
CWFE	101	2.00	6.22	3.89	.69
CSWSS	101	1.00	7.00	4.41	1.39

The results in Table 4.1 indicate satisfactory levels of agreement across all the investigated variables: PSS had a mean of 1.91 and a SD of .65, which reflected that participants had average levels of stress; a mean of 2.40 and a SD of .59 indicated average levels of WFC for participants; a mean of 3.70 and a SD of .88 indicated high levels of social support for the participants; a mean of 3.89 and a SD of .69 indicated that participants had high levels of WFE; and a mean of 4.41 and a SD of 1.39 indicated that participants had high levels of work satisfaction. These results were used for generalisations about the presence and levels of the different factors for single parents in the SANDF.

4.3 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Babbie and Mouton (2012) purport that reliability is a matter of whether the repeated application of a particular method would yield the same result every time. Rosnow and Rosenthal (2008) concur by stating that reliability infers consistency or stability. All five scales included in the study (PSS10, MOS-SSS, WFC scale, WFE scale and SWWS) were item analysed to test for their reliability as well as to support the validity of the research. Item analysis may be explained as an investigation of the performance of items whether considered individually against a particular construct or against the remaining items in a test (Thompson & Levitov, 1985). Analysing items reveals how items contribute to the internal consistency of scales. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to indicate the internal consistency of the various scales. All of the utilised scales were previously documented to have acceptable levels of internal consistency (see par. 3.5).

Item analysis for the various scales revealed acceptable levels of internal consistency for only four of the five utilised scales. The MOS-SSS, WFC scale, WFE scale and SWWS revealed acceptable internal consistency and none of their items were flagged as poorly or negatively related with the rest.

PSS10, on the other hand, had one item which indicated a negative relationship with other scale items. Item 7 of the PSS10 scale indicated a negative relationship with other items in the scale (-0.07). As a result, the item was flagged as problematic. Deletion of the item would have resulted in an insignificant change for the alpha (.69–.74). The item might have been negatively related due to its negative nature. Item 7 was negatively worded and designed to be negatively scored. In view of the aforementioned, the item was retained in the scale.

The reliability of the various scales was estimated for this sample. Cronbach's alpha was applied in measuring reliability. Table 4.2 provides the reliability of the various scales, and is followed by a discussion of their alpha coefficients.

Table 4.2

Scales' reliability coefficients results

Variable (Scale)	Cronbach's alpha (α)
Perceived Stress Survey 10	.69
Medical Outcomes Study Social Support Survey	.95
Work–Family Conflict Scale	.78
Work–Family Enrichment Scale	.88
Satisfaction With Work Scale	.83

In order to determine how well the instruments measured the identified research variables, reliability analysis was conducted (Table 4.2). Reliability analysis returned acceptable results, and significant Cronbach's alpha levels ranging from .69 to .95. All the scales were deemed appropriate and fair in line with the study sample.

4.4 INFERENCE STATISTICS

Inferential statistics are a group of methods applied for drawing and measuring the reliability of conclusions about the population based on information obtained from a sample of the population (Weiss, 1999).

4.4.1 Analysis of variance

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the difference in how participating single and dual parents experienced the various variables of interest. ANOVA is “a hypothesis-testing procedure that is used to evaluate mean differences between two or more treatments or populations” (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011, p. 366). In order for ANOVA to be significant, the P-value has to be less than 0.05 (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). The ANOVA results may be seen below.

H1: Single parents experience significantly higher levels of stress than dual parents

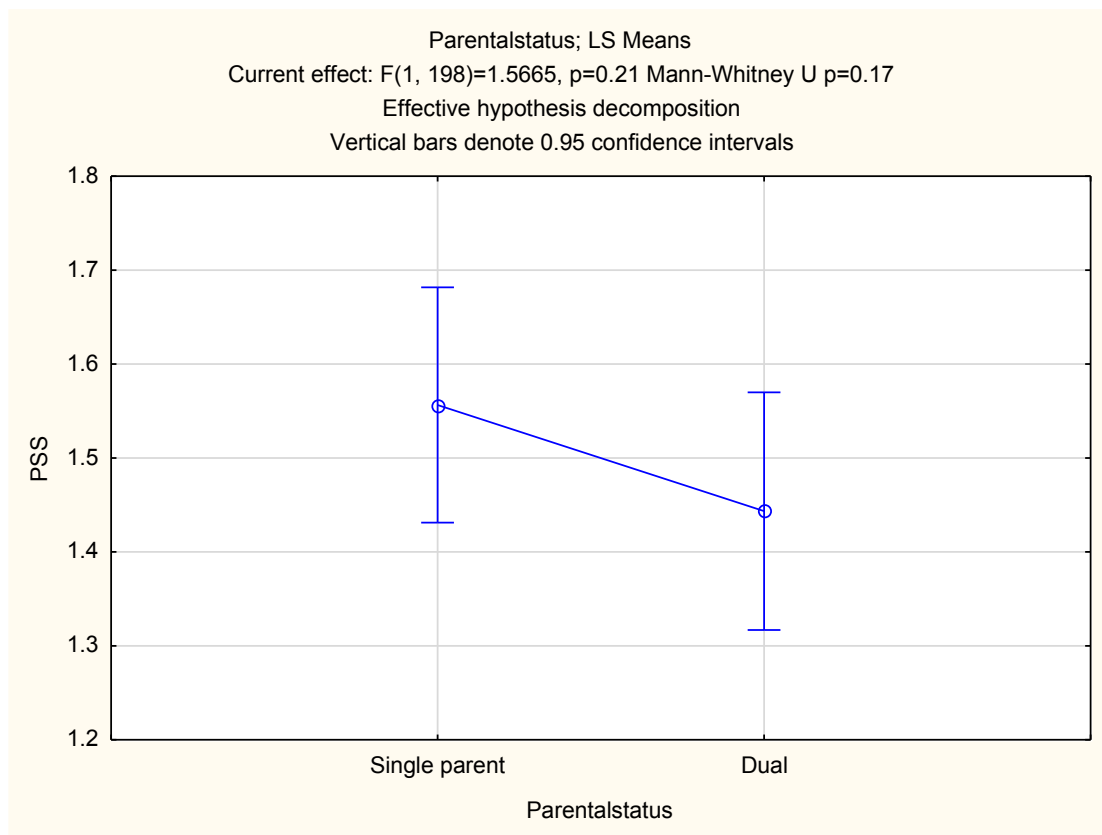


Figure 4.6 Stress experience between single and dual parents

The results in Figure 4.6 show mean differences in stress experience between single and dual parents ($M = 1.55$ for single parents and $M = 1.44$ for dual parents). Although there are mean differences in stress experience for single and dual parents, the differences are insignificant ($F = 1.566$; $p > 0.05$). Based on these results, it was concluded that participating single parents did not experience significantly higher levels of stress than participating dual parents. Based on the results, H1 was rejected.

H2: Single parents experience significantly lower levels of social support than dual parents

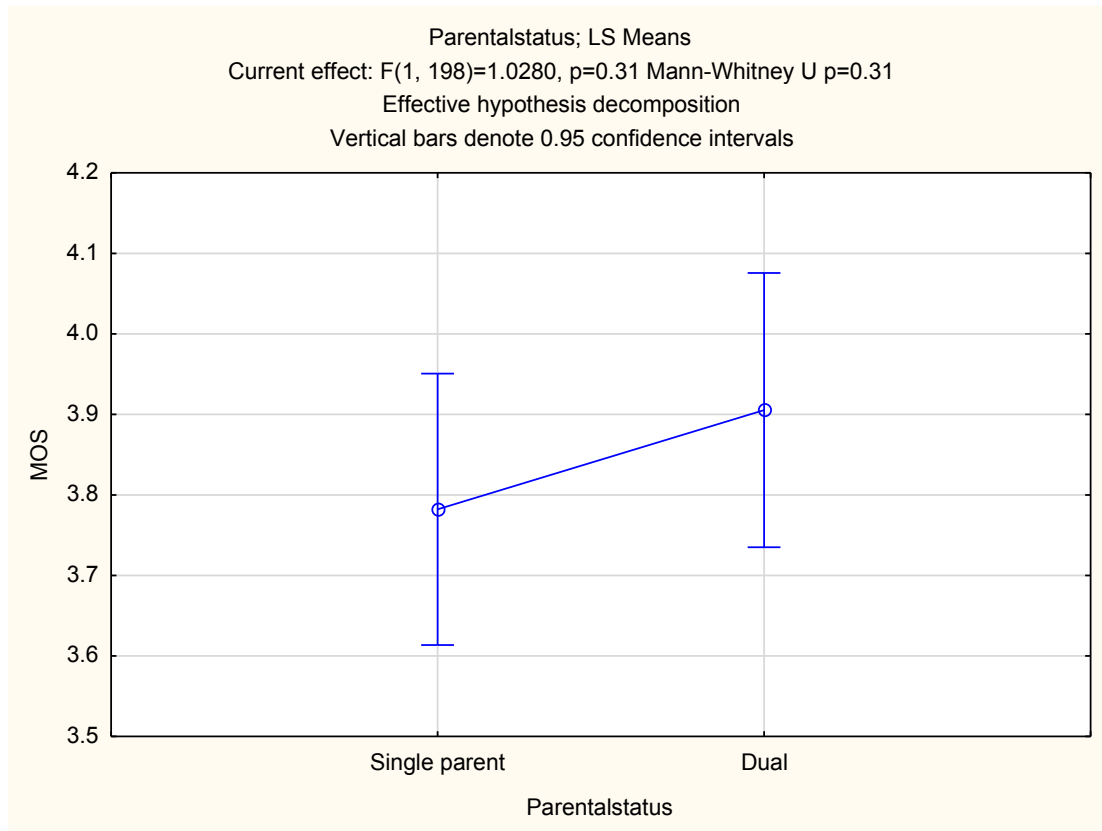


Figure 4.7 Social support experienced by single and dual parents

The results in Figure 4.7 show mean differences in the level of social support between single and dual parents ($M = 3.78$ for single parents and $M = 3.90$ for dual parents). Although there are mean differences in levels of social support for single and dual parents, the differences are insignificant ($F = 1.028$; $p > 0.05$). Based on these results, it was concluded that participating single parents did not experience significantly lower levels of social support than participating dual parents. Based on the results, H2 was rejected.

H3: Single parents experience significantly higher levels of WFC than dual parents

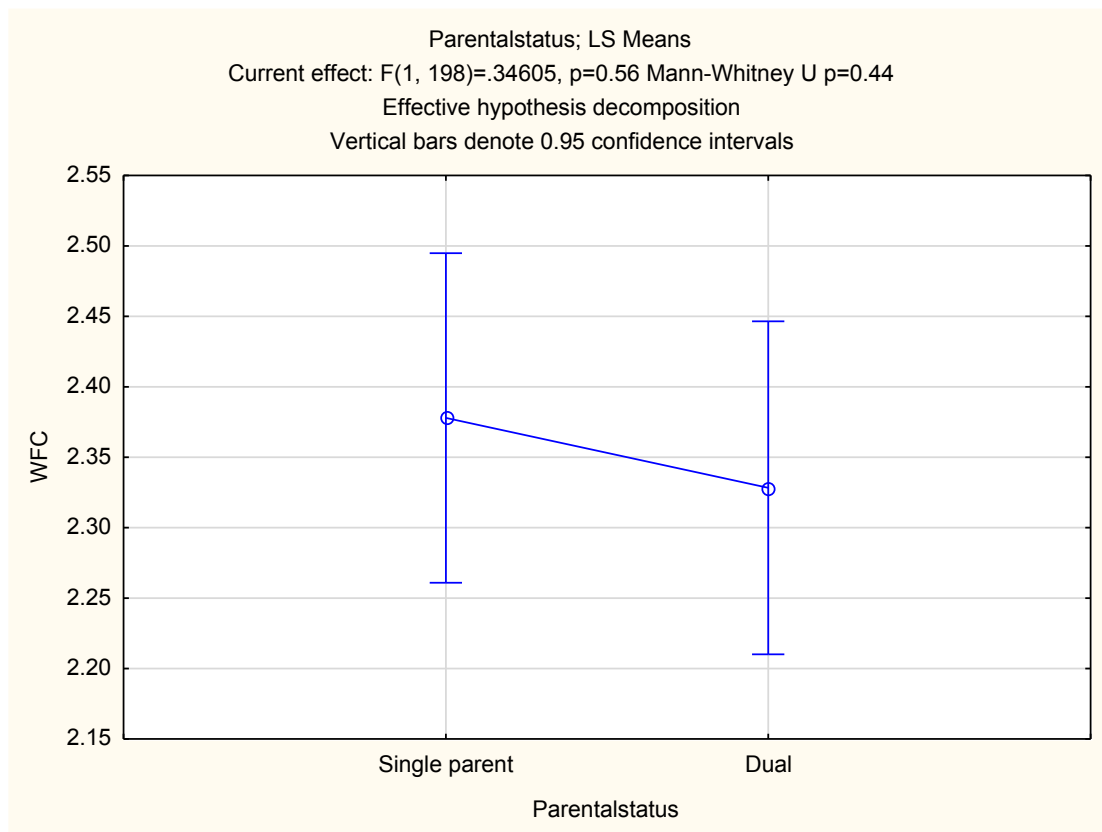


Figure 4.8 WFC experience between single and dual parents

The results in Figure 4.8 show mean differences in the level of WFC between single and dual parents ($M = 2.37$ for single parents and $M = 2.32$ for dual parents). Although there are mean differences in levels of WFC for single and dual parents, the differences are insignificant ($F = .346$; $p > 0.05$). Based on these results, it was concluded that participating single parents did not experience significantly higher levels of WFC than participating dual parents. Based on the results, H3 was rejected.

H4: Single parents experience significantly lower levels of WFE than dual parents

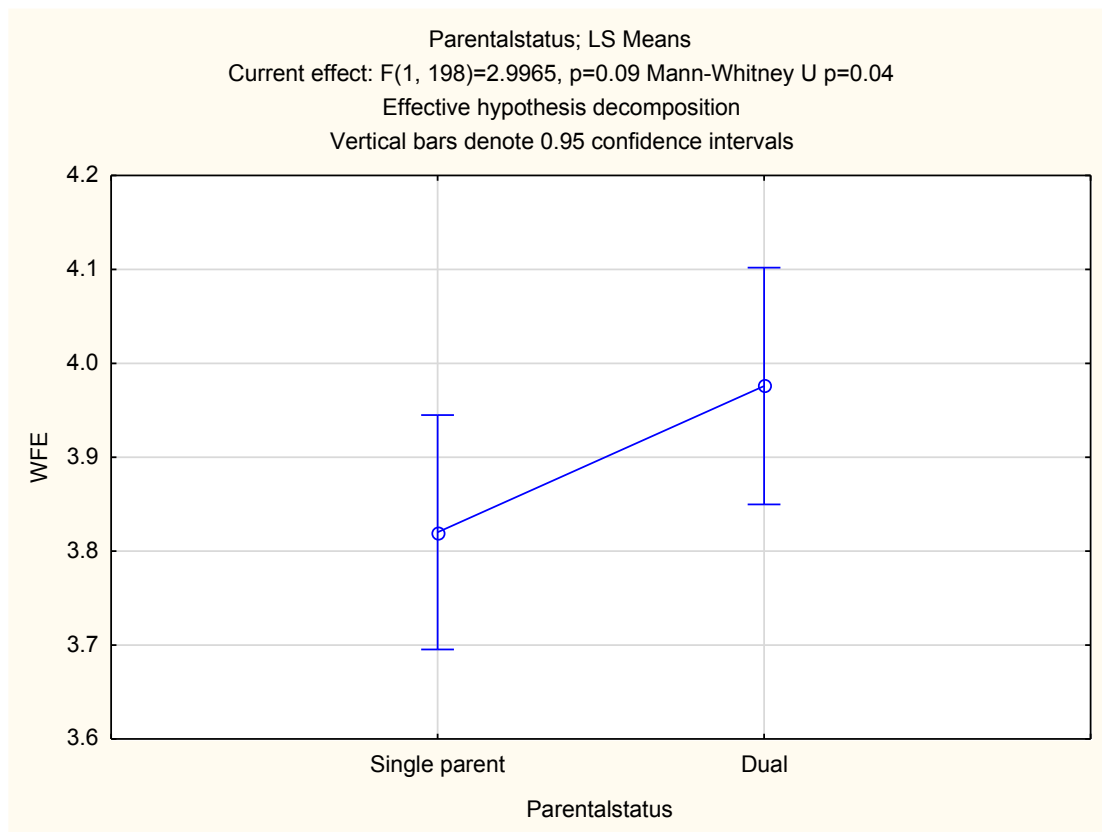


Figure 4.9 WFE experience between single and dual parents

The results in Figure 4.9 show mean differences in the level of WFE between single and dual parents ($M = 3.82$ for single parents and $M = 3.97$ for dual parents). The mean differences in the levels of WFE for single and dual parents are significant ($F = 2.996$; $p < 0.05$). Based on these results, it was concluded that participating single parents experienced lower levels of WFE than participating dual parents. Based on the results, H4 was accepted.

H5: Single parents experience significantly lower levels of work satisfaction than dual parents

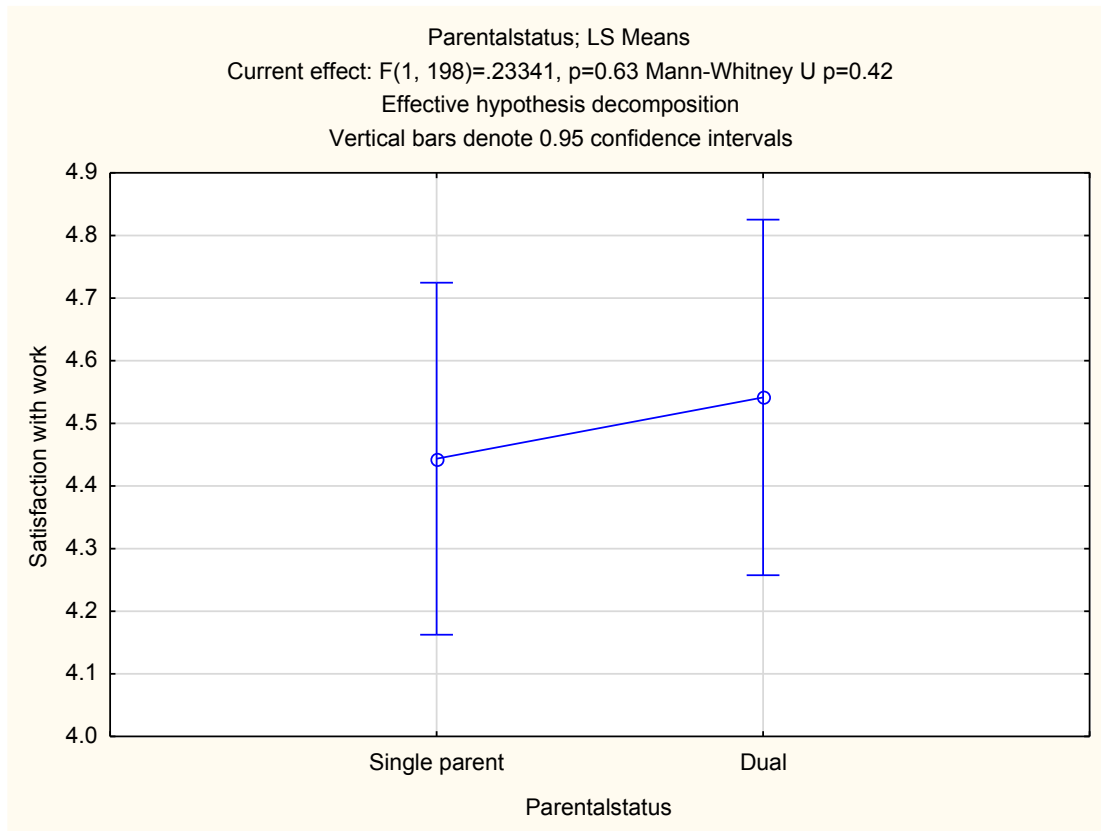


Figure 4.10 Work satisfaction experience between single and dual parents

The results in Figure 4.10 show mean differences in the level of WFC between single and dual parents ($M = 4.44$ for single parents and $M = 4.54$ for dual parents). Although there are mean differences in levels of work satisfaction for single and dual parents, the differences are insignificant ($F = .233$; $p > 0.05$). Based on these results, it was concluded that participating single parents did not experience significantly lower levels of work satisfaction than participating dual parents. Based on the results, H5 was rejected.

4.4.2 Correlation analysis

Gravetter and Wallnau (2011, p. 467) define correlation as “a statistical technique that is used to measure and describe a relationship between two variables”. A correlation of ± 1.00 indicates a perfect and consistent relationship whilst a correlation of 0 indicates no consistency. For the purpose of this study, Spearman’s correlation, which measures the relationship between two variables when both are measured on ordinal scales by means of r , was applied (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011).

A correlation of $\pm .80$ to ± 1.00 is referred to as a 'high' correlation and acceptable, a correlation of $\pm .60$ to $\pm .79$ is referred to as 'moderately high' and acceptable, a correlation of $\pm .40$ to $\pm .59$ is referred to as 'moderate', a correlation of $\pm .20$ to $\pm .39$ is referred to as 'low', and any correlation below $\pm .20$ is disregarded (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011).

Table 4.3

Spearman correlations between the variables of interest

From variable	To variable	Spearman r	p
Stress	Work satisfaction	-.22	.00
Social support	Stress	-.22	.00
WFE	Stress	-.35	.00
Social support	Work satisfaction	.17	.02
Social support	WFC	-.20	.01
Social support	WFE	.40	.00
WFC	Work satisfaction	-.34	.00
WFE	Work satisfaction	.48	.00
WFE	WFC	-.27	.00

Table 4.3 reflects a summary of correlation results between the variables of interest. These results were used to respond to the empirical objectives (see par 1.3.3). The objective was to assess the relationship between stress, social support, WFC, WFE and work satisfaction in a sample of SANDF single parents. Some of the independent variables (WFC and WFE) yielded significant results (see Table 4.3) when correlated with work satisfaction (dependent variable). Below are results from testing the hypotheses:

H6: There is a significant relationship between stress and work satisfaction

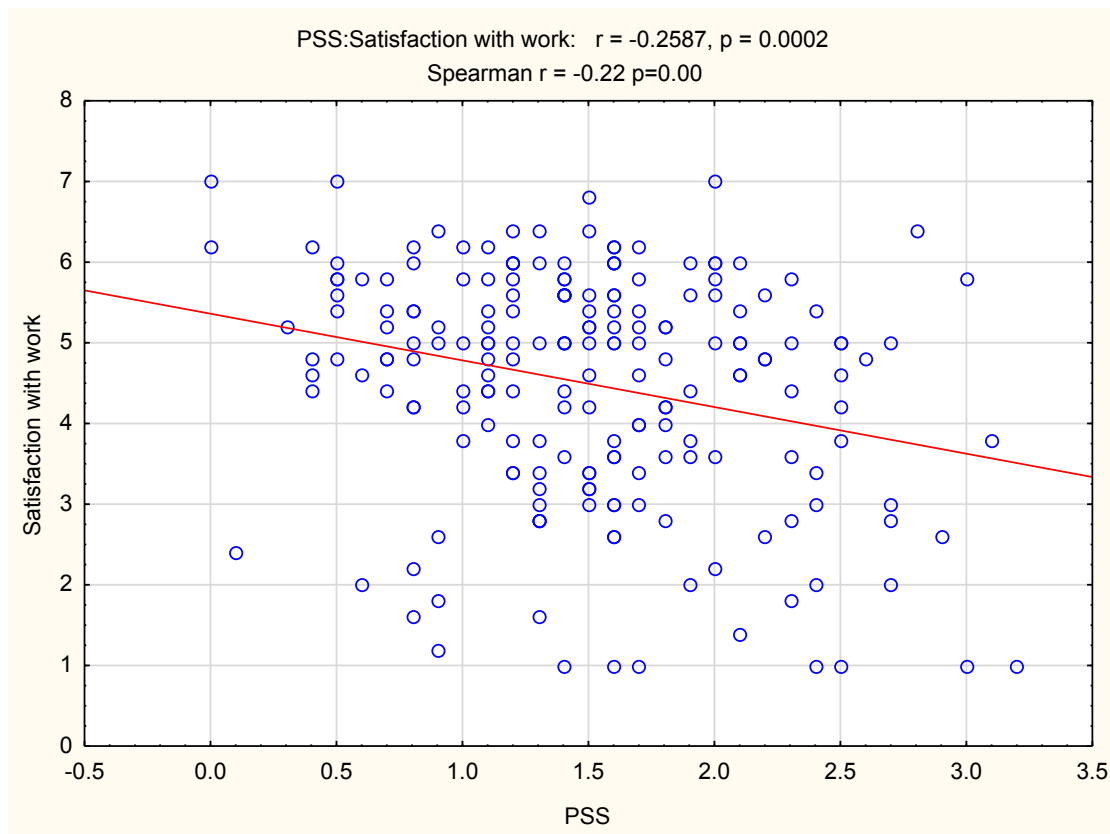


Figure 4.11 Relationship between stress and work satisfaction

The results in Figure 4.11 show a low linear but significant negative correlation between stress and work satisfaction ($r = -0.22$; $p = 0.00$). This means that, as stress increases, work satisfaction decreases in the opposite direction. H6 was accepted.

H7: There is a significant relationship between social support and stress

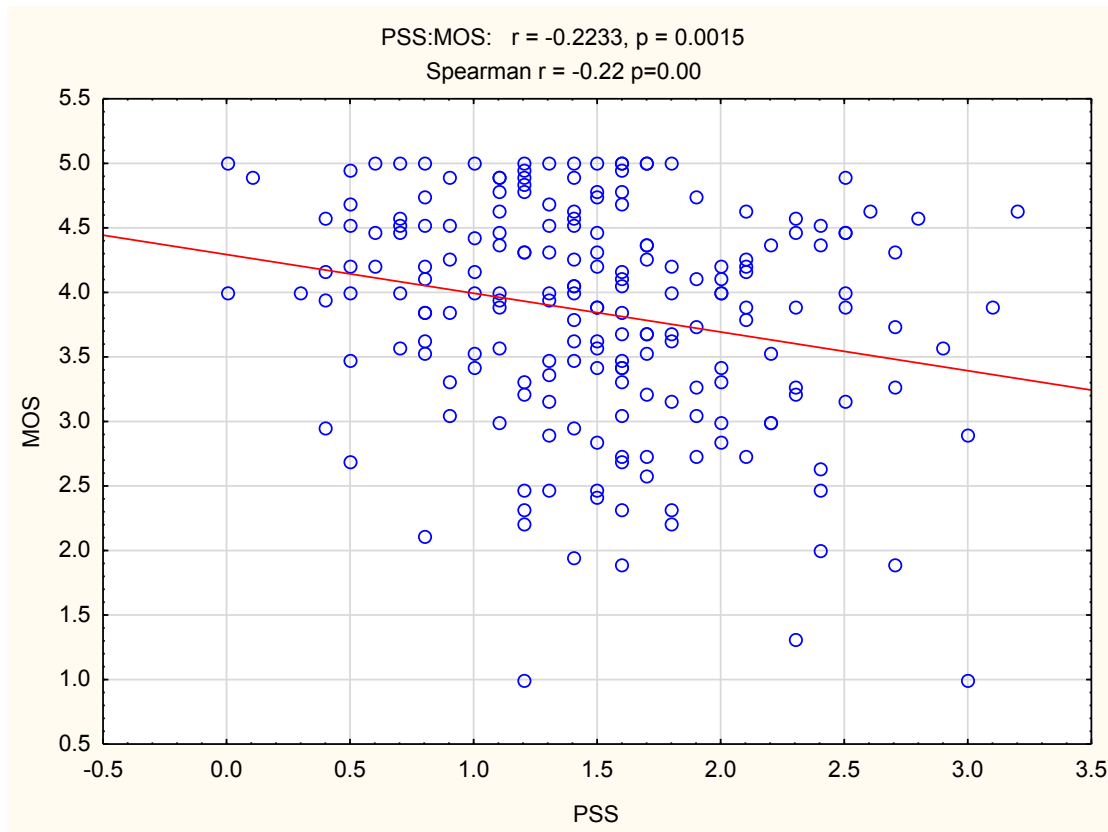


Figure 4.12 Relationship between social support and stress

The results in Figure 4.12 show a low linear but significant negative correlation between social support and stress ($r = -0.22$; $p = 0.00$). This means that, as social support increases, stress decreases in the opposite direction. H7 was accepted.

H8: There is a significant relationship between social support and WFC

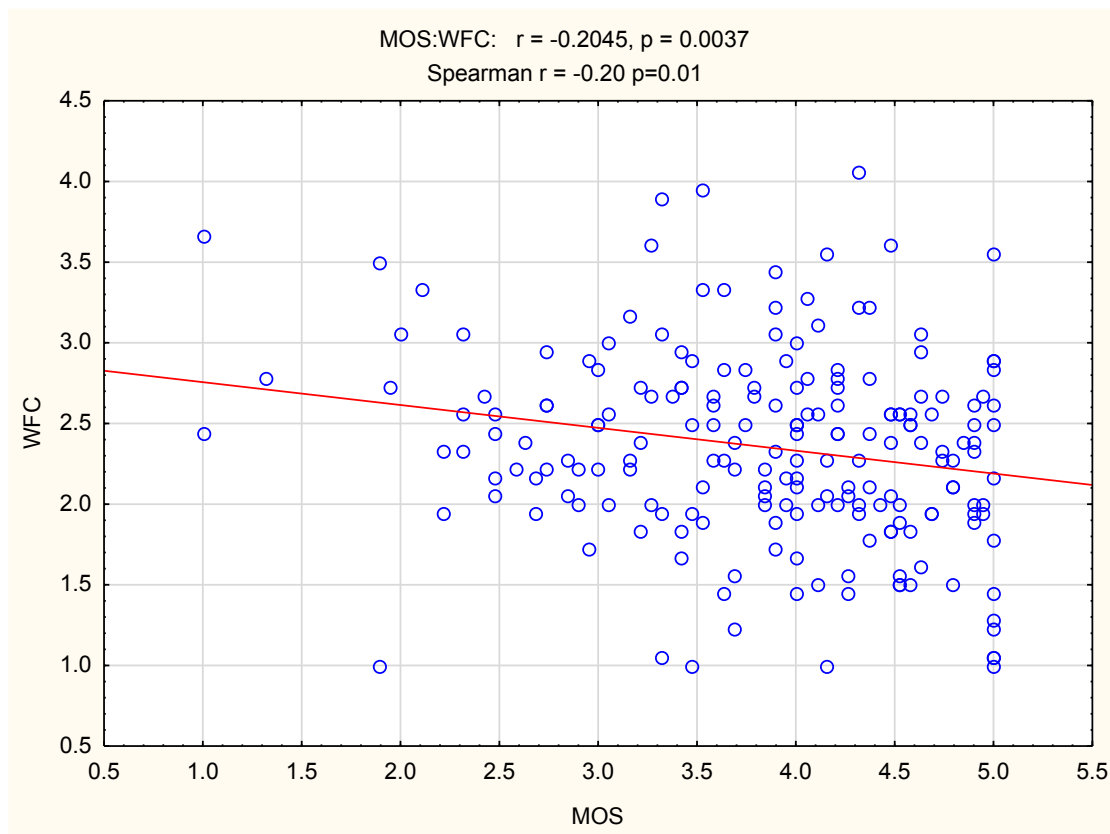


Figure 4.13 Relationship between social support and WFC

The results in Figure 4.13 show a low linear but insignificantly negative correlation between social support and WFC ($r = -0.20$; $p = 0.01$). This means that, as social support increases, WFC decreases in the opposite direction. H8 was rejected.

H9: There is a significant relationship between social support and WFE

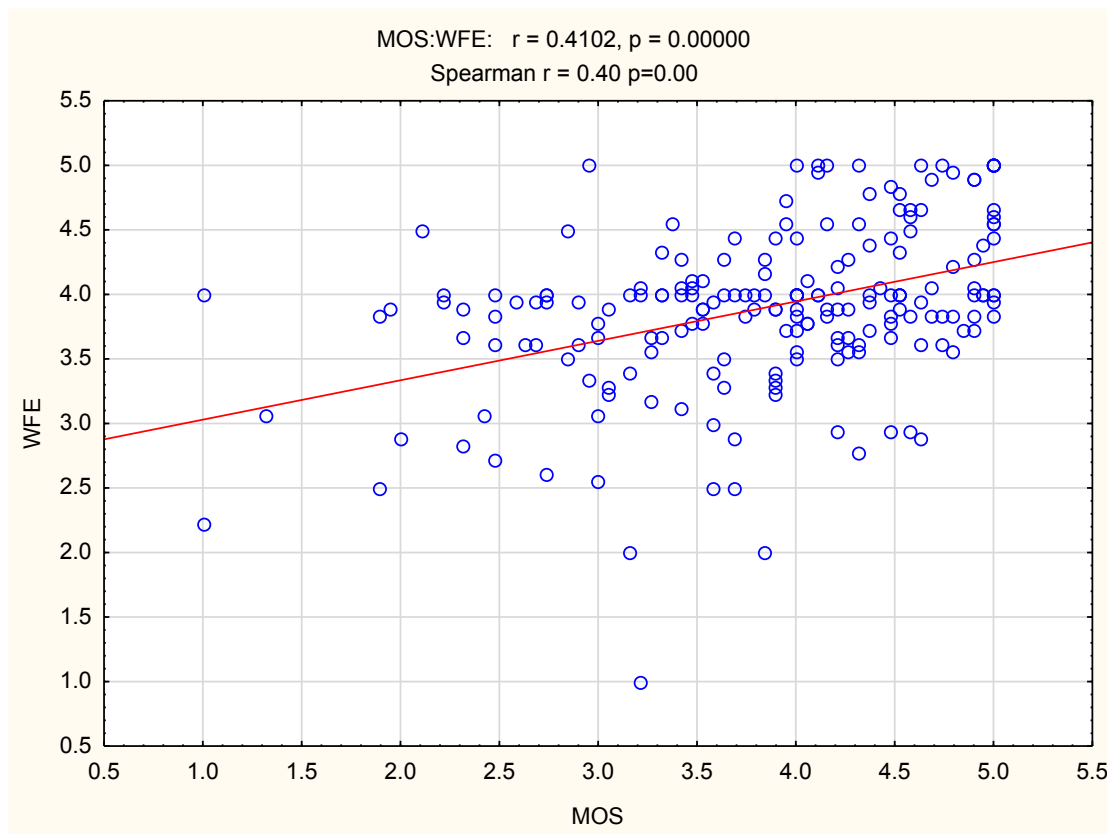


Figure 4.14 Relationship between social support and WFE

The results in Figure 4.14 show a moderate linear and significant positive correlation between social support and WFE ($r = 0.40$; $p = 0.00$). This means that, as social support increases, WFE also increases in the similar direction. H9 was accepted.

H10: There is a significant relationship between social support and work satisfaction

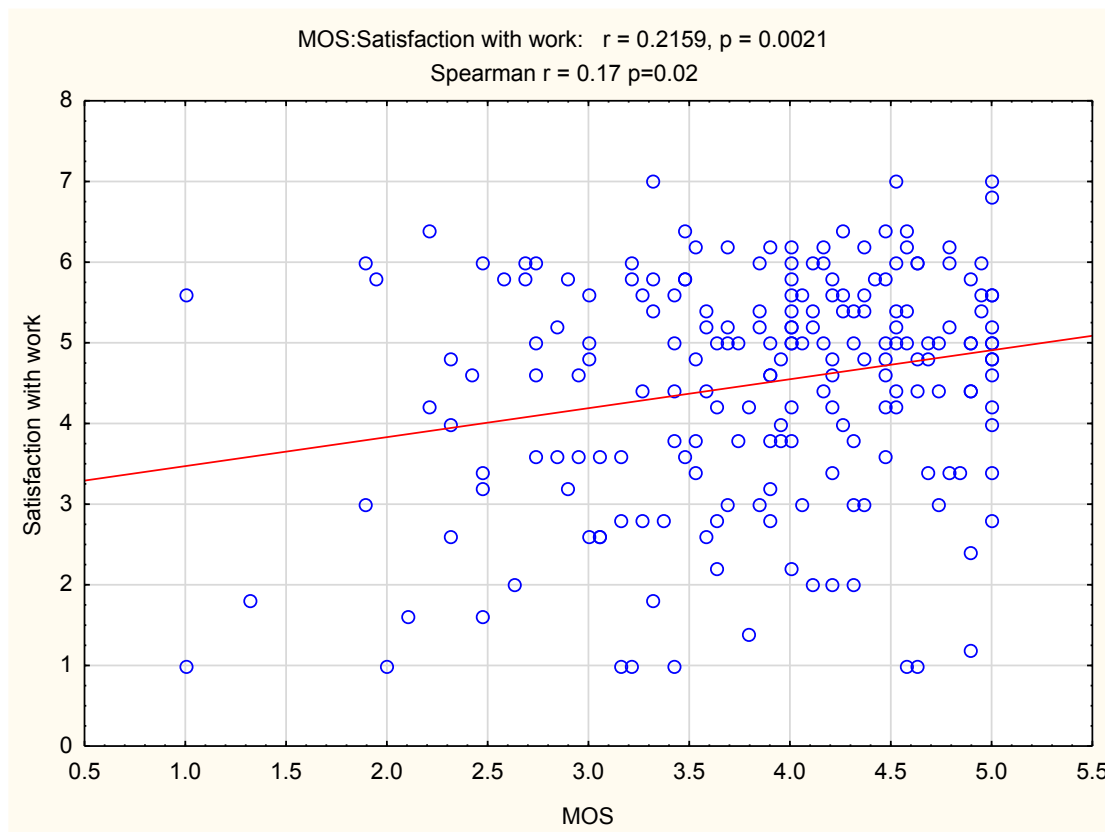


Figure 4.15 Relationship between social support and work satisfaction

The results in Figure 4.15 show a negligible linear and insignificantly positive correlation between social support and work satisfaction ($r = 0.17$; $p = 0.02$). This means that, as social support increases, work satisfaction also increases in the similar direction. H10 was rejected.

H11: There is a significant relationship between WFC and work satisfaction

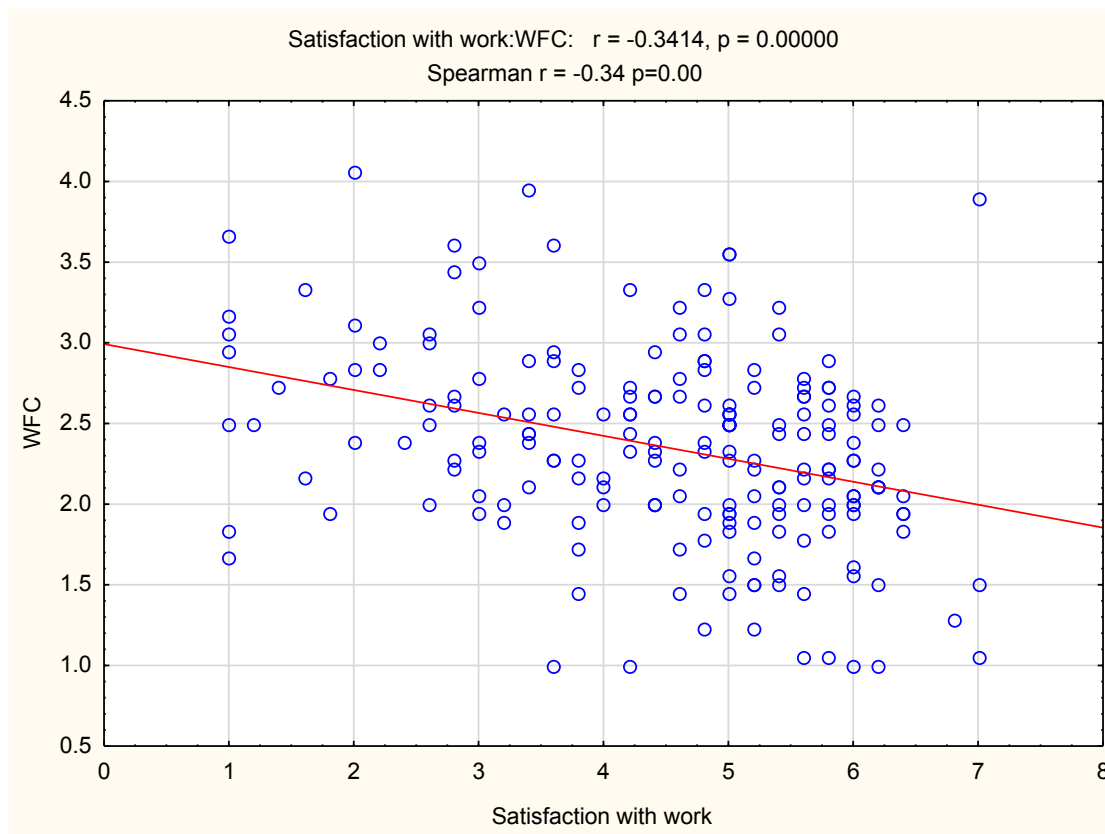


Figure 4.16 Relationship between WFC and work satisfaction

The results in Figure 4.16 show a low linear but significant negative correlation between WFC and work satisfaction ($r = -0.34$; $p = 0.00$). This means that, as WFC increases, work satisfaction decreases in the opposite direction. H11 was accepted.

H12: There is a significant relationship between WFE and WFC

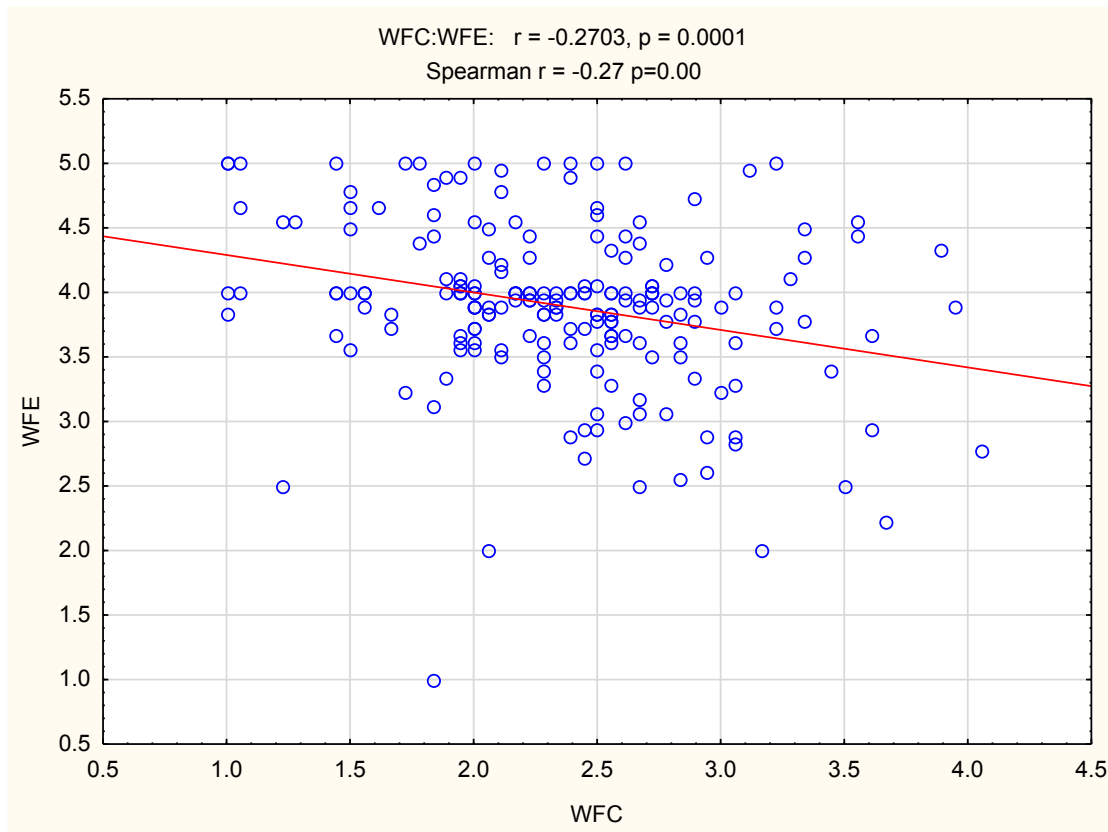


Figure 4.17 Relationship between WFE and WFC

The results in Figure 4.17 show a low linear but significant negative correlation between WFE and WFC ($r = -0.27$; $p = 0.00$). This means that, as WFE increases, WFC decreases in the opposite direction. H12 was accepted.

H13: There is a significant relationship between WFE and stress

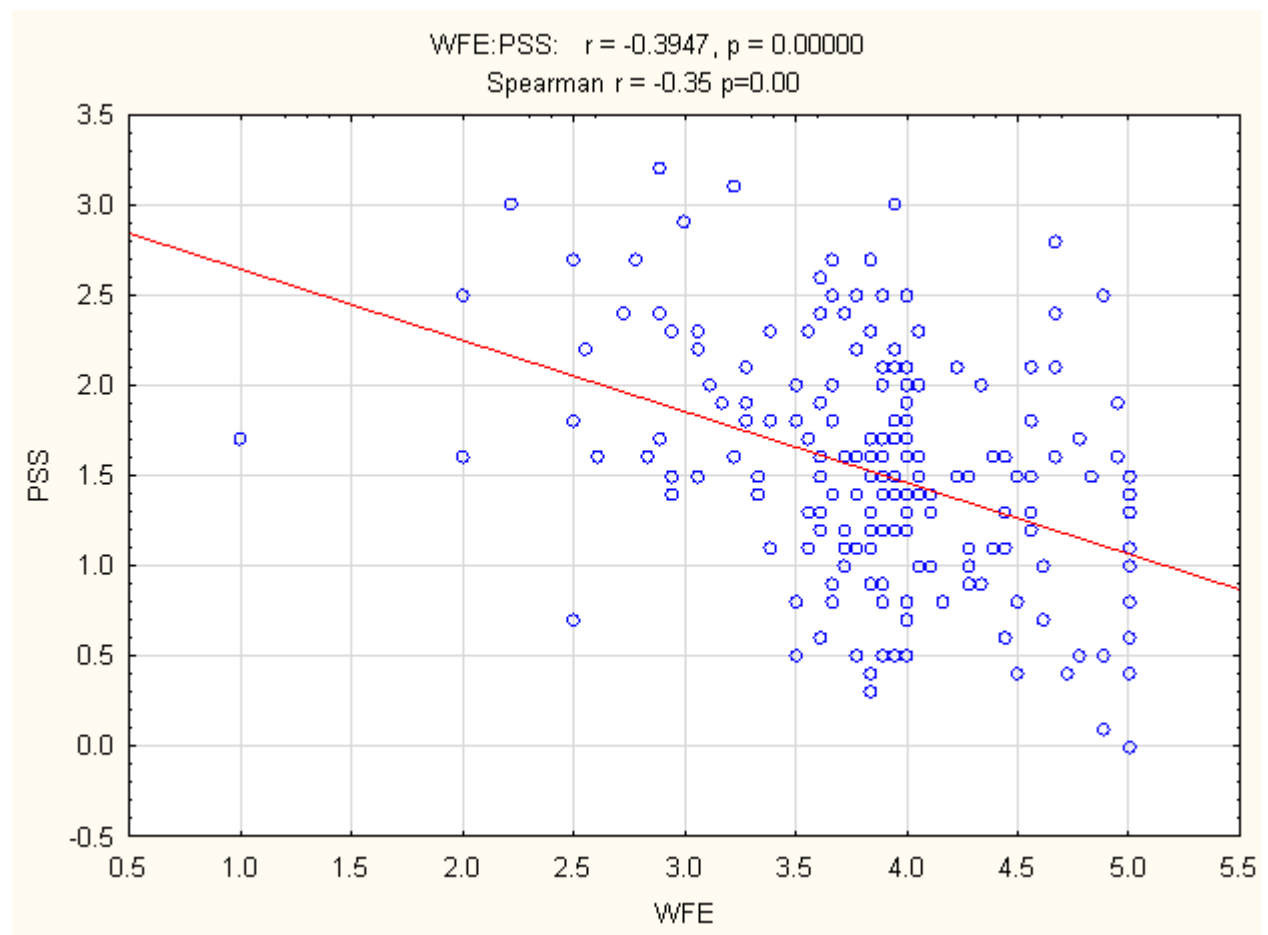


Figure 4.18 Relationship between WFE and stress

The results in Figure 4.18 show a low linear but significant negative correlation between WFC and work satisfaction ($r = -0.35$; $p = 0.00$). This means that, as WFC increases, work satisfaction decreases in the opposite direction. H13 was accepted.

H14: There is a significant relationship between WFE and work satisfaction

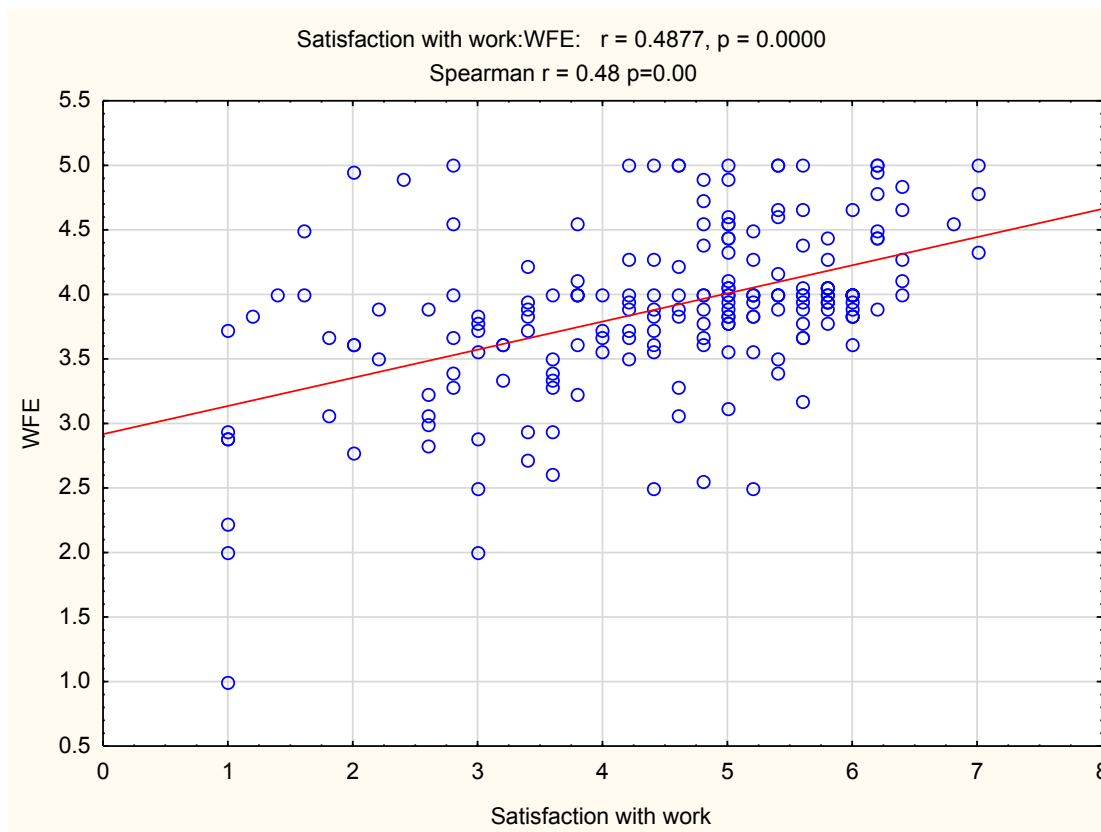


Figure 4.19 Relationship between WFE and work satisfaction

The results in Figure 4.19 show a moderate linear but significant positive correlation between WFE and work satisfaction ($r = 0.48$; $p = 0.00$). This means that, as WFE increases, work satisfaction also increases in the similar direction. H14 was accepted.

4.5 PARTIAL LEAST SQUARE ANALYSIS (PLS)

Following descriptive, reliability and inferential analyses, further statistical analyses for testing the relationships among variables as hypothesised (see Fig. 1.1) were conducted. The model analysis was conducted using PLS. The PLS analysis performed followed two steps, namely a measurement model and a structural model.

In order to confirm the reliability and validity of the model, composite reliability and average variance extracted were conducted. In PLS, a reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher and a validity coefficient of 0.50 are preferred. R-squared is calculated to measure the variance proportion explained by PLS components. PLS values can be from 0% to 100%. The higher the R-squared value, the greater the model fit. Table

4.4 below provides results from the aforementioned PLS analyses. This is followed by a discussion of the results.

Table 4.4

Results overview of model

Variables	R-squared	Composite Reliability	AVE
Social support		0.96	0.65
Stress	0.14	0.76	0.37
WFC	0.09	0.85	0.55
Work satisfaction	0.32	0.88	0.66
WFE	0.16	0.91	0.71

The R-squared results indicate the percentage in the independent variable which is explained by the model. Table 4.4 indicates that stress ($r^2 = .14$) only explains 14% of variance to the standard error of the mean (SEM) model fit, WFC ($r^2 = .09$) only explains 9% of variance to the SEM model fit, work satisfaction ($r^2 = .32$) only explains 32% of variance to the SEM model fit and WFE ($r^2 = .16$) only explains 16% of variance to the SEM model fit. Based on Table 4.4, it was concluded that all latent variables met the .70 level of acceptance for composite reliability (i.e. .76 to .96). Based on Table 4.4, only four latent variables had acceptable average variance extracted (AVE values). Stress (.37) failed to meet the required threshold of .50.

Following the reliability and validity overview of the model, the measurement and structural model were computed. Table 4.5 below provides results for the measurement model.

Table 4.5

Measurement model

Path	Estimate	Bootstrap Lower	Bootstrap Upper	Significant
Social support>MOS10	0.74	0.66	0.82	yes
Social support>MOS11	0.75	0.68	0.81	yes
Social support>MOS12	0.72	0.63	0.79	yes
Social support>MOS13	0.81	0.75	0.85	yes
Social support>MOS14	0.81	0.74	0.86	yes
Social support>MOS15	0.80	0.74	0.85	yes
Social support>MOS16	0.78	0.71	0.84	yes

Social support>MOS17	0.77	0.69	0.84	yes
Social support>MOS18	0.81	0.76	0.86	yes
Social support>MOS19	0.81	0.74	0.87	yes
Social support>MOS2	0.61	0.51	0.70	yes
Social support>MOS20	0.79	0.72	0.85	yes
Social support>MOS3	0.73	0.64	0.80	yes
Social support>MOS4	0.72	0.63	0.80	yes
Social support>MOS5	0.78	0.71	0.83	yes
Social support>MOS6	0.67	0.55	0.76	yes
Social support>MOS7	0.79	0.71	0.85	yes
Social support>MOS8	0.78	0.70	0.83	yes
Social support>MOS9	0.79	0.71	0.84	yes
Stress>PSS1	0.68	0.51	0.77	yes
Stress>PSS10	0.74	0.61	0.82	yes
Stress>PSS2	0.72	0.59	0.79	yes
Stress>PSS3	0.77	0.65	0.83	yes
Stress>PSS4	0.08	-0.21	0.34	no
Stress>PSS5	0.36	0.01	0.59	yes
Stress>PSS6	0.67	0.51	0.77	yes
Stress>PSS7	-0.23	-0.49	0.06	no
Stress>PSS8	0.11	-0.21	0.39	no
Stress>PSS9	0.74	0.62	0.81	yes
WFE>family-to-work affect	0.72	0.57	0.82	yes
WFE>family-to-work development	0.78	0.66	0.86	yes
WFE>family-to-work efficiency	0.65	0.48	0.78	yes
WFE>work-to-family affect	0.87	0.82	0.90	yes
WFE>work-to-family capital	0.86	0.80	0.89	yes
WFE>work-to-family development	0.86	0.81	0.90	yes
WFC>behaviour interference with family	0.72	0.58	0.80	yes
WFC>behaviour interference with work	0.70	0.57	0.79	yes
WFC>strain interference with family	0.81	0.73	0.86	yes
WFC>strain interference with work	0.65	0.48	0.77	yes
WFC>time interference with family	0.71	0.59	0.79	yes
WFC>time interference with work	0.57	0.38	0.72	yes
Work satisfaction>SWSS1	0.80	0.71	0.86	yes
Work satisfaction>SWSS2	0.8	0.72	0.85	yes
Work satisfaction>SWSS3	0.87	0.82	0.90	yes
Work satisfaction>SWSS4	0.79	0.71	0.85	yes
Work satisfaction>SWSS5	0.59	0.46	0.7	yes

Table 4.5 above indicates variables that were included in the model whether they were significant or not. Only WFE and WFC composed of dimensions that contributed to the latent variables. Stress, social support and work satisfaction were measured as latent variables. Social support and work satisfaction had significant coefficient levels and relatively high estimates (see Table 4.5). The latent variable stress however only had seven significant items with high levels (see Table 4.5). PSS4, 7 and 8 were insignificant and had low values (i.e. 0.08, -0.23 and 0.11 respectively). WFE consisted of six dimensions that were used as manifest variables to measure the latent variable. All six dimensions were found to be significant with relatively high values ranging from .65 to .87. WFC consisted of six dimensions that were used to measure the main latent variable. All six dimensions were found to be significant with relatively high values ranging from .57 to .81.

Following completion of the reliability and validity analyses for the overall measurement model, PLS was used to estimate the structural model. The PLS bootstrap percentile, path coefficients, significance across latent variables and the estimate value were analysed. The analyses were conducted in order to determine whether the proposed model of work satisfaction (Fig. 1.1) was established or not. The path coefficient estimate values were used to determine the direction and strength of the relationships between variables. The following results were found (see Table 4.6 and Figure 4.20):

Table 4.6

Structural model

Path	Estimate	Bootstrap Lower	Bootstrap Upper	Significant
Social support>stress	0.00	-0.17	0.18	No
Social support>WFC	-0.10	-0.25	0.64	No
Social support>work satisfaction	0.01	-0.12	0.17	No
Social support>WFE	0.41	0.29	0.53	Yes
Stress>work satisfaction	-0.09	-0.24	0.59	No
WFC>work satisfaction	-0.20	-0.33	-0.61	Yes
WFE>stress	-0.38	-0.54	-0.251	Yes
WFE>WFC	-0.24	-0.42	-0.09	Yes
WFE>work satisfaction	0.42	0.23	0.55	Yes

The results in Table 4.6 indicate various relationships and directions between variables. The structural model results are reported by way of a combination of Table 4.6 (above) and Figure 4.20 (below). The path from social support to stress was positive but insignificant (see Figure 4.20). H7 could not be established and therefore rejected. The path from social support to WFC was negative but insignificant (see Fig. 4.20). H8 could not be established and was therefore rejected. The path from social support to work satisfaction (see Fig. 4.20) was positive but insignificant. H10 could not be established and was thus rejected.

The path from social support to WFE was positive and significant (see Fig. 4.20). H9 was established and therefore accepted. The path from stress to work satisfaction was negative but insignificant (see Fig. 4.20). H6 was not established and thus rejected. The path from WFC to work satisfaction was negative and significant (see Fig. 4.20). H11 was established and therefore accepted. The path from WFE to stress was negative and significant (see Fig. 4.20). H13 was established and accepted. The path from WFE to WFC was negative and significant (see Fig. 4.20). H12 was established and accepted. The path from WFE to work satisfaction was positive and significant (see Fig. 4.20). H14 was established and accepted. Figure 4.20 illustrates the results as established in the PLS structural model.

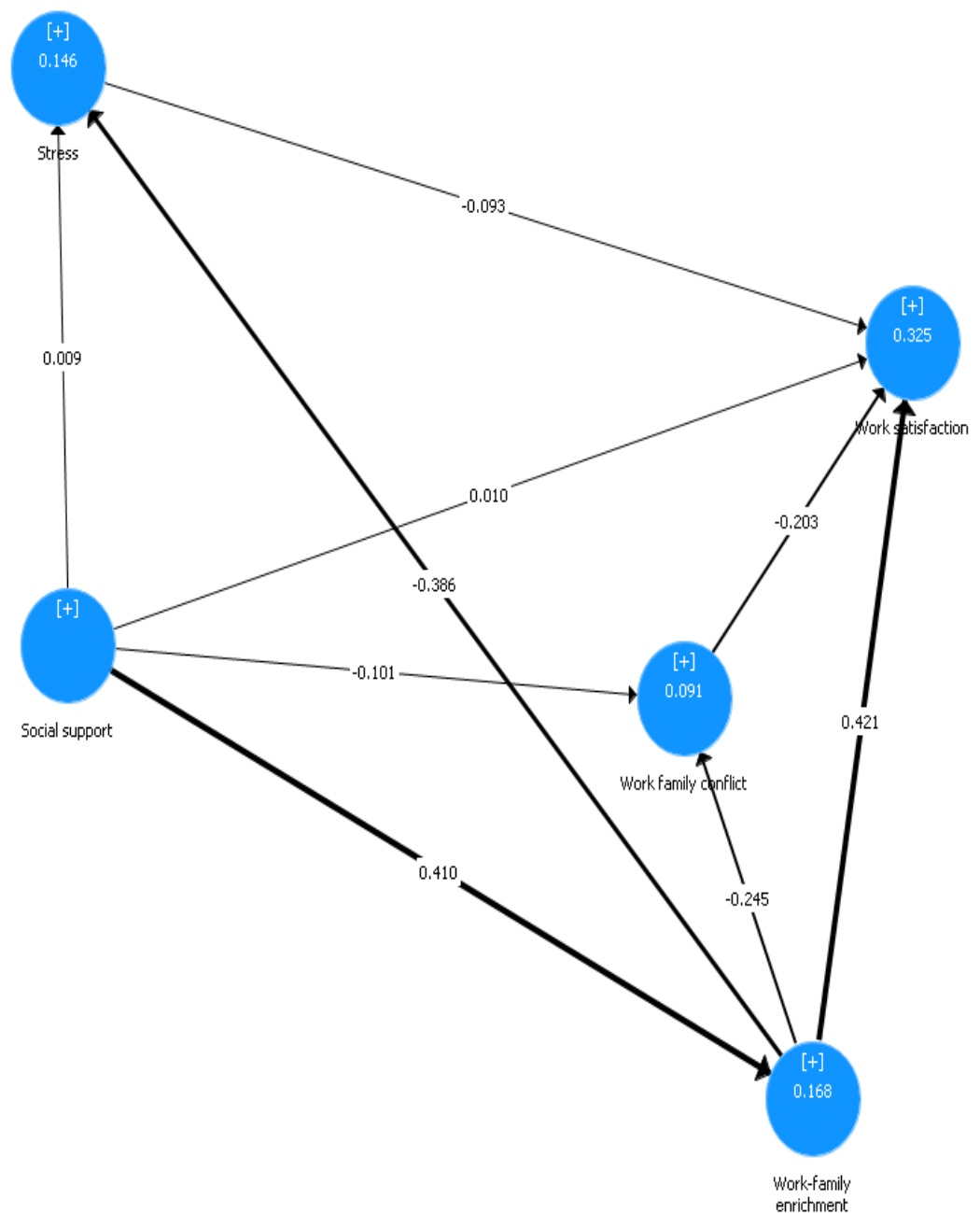


Figure 4.20 Structural model results

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented results obtained from various statistical analyses. The results included descriptive statistics, reliability and validity, correlation, the measurement model and the structural model. Reliability and validity analyses yielded satisfactory

results. Correlation analyses yielded mixed results. Both negative and positive correlations were found among variables, which were utilised to test the stated hypotheses. Stress ($r = 0.22$; $p = 0.00$), WFC ($r = -0.34$; $p = 0.00$) and WFE ($r = 0.48$; $p = 0.00$) were found to be significantly correlated with work satisfaction.

PLS analysis was conducted to test the relationship among the variables of interest further as well as to test the properties of the proposed model of work satisfaction (see Fig. 1.1). Analyses were performed to determine the reliability of the model constructs. The reliability and validity results for the overall measurement model were above the preferred threshold for the composite reliability and AVE. According to the structural model results, the work satisfaction of SANDF single parents is directly and significantly influenced by WFC and WFE. Stress does not have a significant nor indirect influence on single-parent work satisfaction. Social support was revealed to have an indirect and significant influence on work satisfaction through WFE by the structural model. The results obtained in this chapter are discussed in the next chapter (Chapter 5).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter comprises a discussion of the results that were presented in Chapter 4. Discussion of results will mirror how the results were presented in Chapter 4. Firstly, descriptive statistics, in the form of means, SDs as well as the minimum and maximum values will be discussed. Secondly, ANOVA in the form of means, f-values and significance will be discussed. Lastly, inferential statistics in the form of correlations coefficient values as well as PLS analyses results (measurement and structural model) will be discussed.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF MEASURES OF CENTRAL TENDENCY

The mean value (see Table 4.1) for perception of stress among the participating single parents was 1.91, indicating an average level of agreement regarding stress for the single parents. A very low SD of .65 associated with stress was observed. This indicates that there were very slight disagreements in terms of stress for single parents, meaning that the majority experienced average levels of stress. This is supported by the maximum of 3.20, which means that the majority of single parents experienced average levels of stress and a minimum of 0.00, which means that none of the single parents disagreed with the average experience of stress. Stress experience for all the single parents was average.

The average experience of stress results coincide with Russo and Fallon (2015, p. 407) who defined stress as a reaction that “is defined by the situations or life events that require adjustment”. This means that stress is subjective in that it is an individual’s perception of the stressful event and how he or she responds to it. Thus different soldiers could experience the same event; however, their experience of stress will differ according to their subjective perceptions of the stressful event. Although the participating single parents experienced stress, their perception of it was a major contributor to how they experienced it. This might be the reason for the question of why the participants only reported average and not high levels of stress. This further indicates a need for the SANDF to support single parents with enrichment programmes to counter stress.

The mean value for the perceived level of WFC for participating single parents was 2.40 (see Table 4.1), which indicated that single parents experienced moderate levels of WFC. A very low SD of .59 associated with WFC was observed. The low SD means that there were very slight disagreements in terms of WFC for the single parents, meaning that the majority of single parents experienced moderate levels of WFC. The aforementioned is supported by the maximum value of 4.06, which means that the majority of single parents experienced moderate levels of WFC as well as the minimum value of 1.00, which means that only one or a few did not experience moderate levels of WFC. WFC experience for these individuals might be more or less than the moderate levels experienced by the majority of single parents.

The moderate experience of WFC corresponds with results found by Kirkland and Katz (1989), which showed that, due to the inherently demanding nature of the military, WFC can be said to be a negative factor towards the relationship between the military (unit) and the soldier's family. The authors further mention four points in the family and unit relationship, which affect military combat readiness. The determining factors are:

- the complex nature of the soldier, his or her family and the military, which leads to each party affecting the other(s);
- families can contribute positively to unit readiness and combat effectiveness;
- the command climate in units determines the degree of support displayed by families; and
- building strong families enhances readiness in a cost-effective manner.

The absence of WFC in the family and unit relationship is a situation where there is positive interaction between the two, which allows the soldier to devote his or her physical and mental energy towards the mission (Kirkland & Katz, 1989; Shinga, 2015). This indicates a need for the SANDF to offer enrichment programmes to assist in countering the experience of WFC.

A mean value of 3.70 (see Table 4.1) was found for social support, which represented the perception that single parents held towards their experience of social support. Such a mean value informs research that single parents experience relatively high levels of social support. A very low SD of .88 was found, which means that single parents had little disagreement regarding their experience of social support. These results are supported by a maximum value of 6.95, which means that

the majority of single parents experienced relatively high levels of social support, and a minimum of 1.19, which means that only one or a few people did not experience relatively high levels of social support. Single parents who did not experience relatively high levels of social support might have experienced lower or higher levels of social support as compared to the majority. Similar notions are held by other researchers. Lim and Lee (2011) promote social support by postulating that it acts as a resource, which increases an individual's ability to cope with stress. The higher a person's perception of social support, the more he or she will cognitively appraise him- or herself as having the ability to deal with work challenges (Rashid et al., 2011). The results indicate a need for the SANDF to support single parents with enrichment programmes to increase the experience of social support.

A mean value of 3.89 (see Table 4.1) was found for WFE, which represented the perception held by single parents towards their experience of WFE. Such a mean value means that participating single parents experienced relatively high levels of WFE. A very low SD of .69 was observed, which means that the participating single parents had little disagreement regarding their experience of WFE. These results are supported by the maximum value of 6.22, which means that the majority of participating single parents experienced relatively high levels of WFE as well as the minimum value of 2.00, which means that few participants did not experience relatively high levels of WFE. Single parents who did not experience high levels of WFE experienced lower or higher levels of WFE as compared to the majority. These results are in line with previous positive WFE results and outcomes and further emphasise the need for a supportive relationship between employees and organisations.

Previous research has established a positive relationship between WFE and job satisfaction, which is a facet of work satisfaction (see par 2.4.2) (Carlson et al., 2011, Wayne et al. as cited in Akram et al., 2014). Similarly, a positive relationship also exists between WFE and family outcomes. O'Brien et al. (2014) found a positive relationship between positive behaviour or attitudes and outcomes in the family as a result of flexible and supportive work arrangements. Supportive work arrangements can be found in well-integrated units where the commanders focus on maintaining a balance between work and family demands for the soldier (Shinga, 2015).

A mean value of 4.41 (see Table 4.1) was found for work satisfaction, which represented the perception held by participating single parents towards their experience of work satisfaction. Such a mean value means that participating single parents experienced high levels of work satisfaction. A relatively low SD of 1.39 was observed, which means that the single parents had relatively little disagreement regarding their experience of work satisfaction. These results are corroborated by the maximum value of 7.00, which means that the majority of single parents experienced high levels of work satisfaction, and a minimum value of 1.00, which means that one or few single parents did not experience high levels of work satisfaction.

Participating single parents who did not experience high levels of work satisfaction experienced low levels of work satisfaction. Individuals with low levels of work satisfaction have the ability to influence the satisfaction of those with whom they interact. Furthermore, such individuals create unstable organisations and work environments. Low levels of work satisfaction bear cost implications for organisations in the form of low productivity and morale as well as high turnover and absenteeism (Pillay, 2006). Work satisfaction plays a key role in determining where individuals work and for whom as well as their intention to leave the organisation (Elçi & Alpan, 2008; Pillay, 2008).

5.3 DISCUSSION OF ANOVA RESULTS

Analysis of variance was conducted to test whether there were differences in the experiences of the identified variables between single and dual parents. The results indicated that there were mean differences in how participating single and dual parents experienced the various variables. Only one variable (WFE) indicated a significant mean difference ($p < 0.05$). The other four variables (stress, social support, WFC and work satisfaction) were not indicative of significant mean differences. A discussion of the results follows below.

5.3.1 Single- and dual-parent stress experience

Hypothesis 1, stating that single parents experience significantly higher levels of stress than dual parents, was rejected. The results showed insignificant mean differences ($M = 1.55$ for single parents; $M = 1.44$ for dual parents and $F = 1.566$;

$p > 0.05$) (see Fig. 4.6), and Hypothesis 1 was rejected in line with ANOVA criteria stipulated by Gravetter and Walnau (2011).

These results are contradictory to some of the results in previous research. Minotte (2012) reported stress as one of the challenges that single parents in the military face (see Table 2.3). Minotte (2012) further noted that experience of this challenge is due to the lack of support that single parents receive. The results found here, may however possibly coincide with the notion held by (Leman, 2015). Leman (2015) highlighted that, although admittedly largely negative, the single-parent phenomenon consists of a certain level of positivity, which may be seen through increased closeness, independence as well as an opportunity to grow. The lack of significant difference in the stress experience may be because single parents view their situation as positive and as an opportunity to grow rather than as negative. The present sample consisted largely of participants from an African culture, which could possibly mean that participants experienced support from the extended family, which mitigated their stress experience.

5.3.2 Single- and dual-parent social support experience

Hypothesis 2, stating that single parents experience significantly lower levels of social support than dual parents, was rejected. The results showed insignificant mean differences ($M = 3.78$ for single parents; $M = 3.90$ for dual parents and $F = 1.028$; $p > 0.05$) (see Fig. 4.7), and Hypothesis 2 was rejected in line with ANOVA criteria as stipulated (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). These results are contradictory to results in previous research. A study of available literature indicated social support, a derivative of social relationships, as a possible resource for single parents (House et al., 1988; Johnson & Ling, 2013). A study by Vaughn-Coaxum et al. (2015) highlighted that, due to the burden associated with being a single parent, single parents need more instrumental and emotional support than partnered parents. Lack of such support results in single parents constantly worrying about the wellbeing and adjustment of their children.

In line with results found in this study, Williams (2016) is of the opinion that social support could become more of a barrier than a resource for single parents. Single parents in this study might not have recognised the need for them to have more social support and thus perceived themselves as having the necessary social

support. Another possibility might be linked to the profile of the participants. The majority of participants were African (see Fig. 4.2) and male (see Fig. 4.1), which might provide two possible answers. Firstly, Africans are collectivistic in nature Eaton and Louw (2000), which means that being a single -parent does not mean that one lacks support. There is always someone from the extended family available to offer support when needed. In most instances, single parents do not live with their children in isolation (separate house/yard); they share a house or yard with extended family members (Acquaah, 2016).

Secondly, males have been found to be more reluctant to ask for help than women (Kendler, Myers & Prescott, 2005; Wang, Miller & Zhao, 2014). This may be because they do not want to be perceived as weak or unable to take care of their children. This second possibility might have influenced their responses to the questionnaire. Another possibility might be linked to the child-rearing responsibilities of African fathers. Few African fathers live with and raise their children; the majority ask members of their extended family to live with and raise the children. Such single parents support their children financially and see them when on leave.

5.3.3 Single- and dual-parent WFC experience

Hypothesis 3, stating that single parents experience significantly higher levels of WFC than dual parents, was rejected. The results indicated insignificant mean differences ($M = 2.37$ for single parents; $M = 2.32$ for dual parents and $F = .346$; $p > 0.05$) (see Fig. 4.8), and Hypothesis 3 was rejected based on ANOVA criteria as stipulated (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). These results contradict some of the results in previous research. For dual parents, having a partner with whom to share responsibilities would lessen the experience of WFC. Single parents, however, carry the complete responsibility of work and family commitments on their own. Single parents are thus expected to experience more WFC as compared to their dual-parent counterparts (Bourg & Segal, 1999). This was expected to be truer in the SANDF as military work is characterised by abnormal working hours and long durations away from loved ones.

In support of the results found in this study, Shinga (2015) noted that single parents who form part of stable families could be expected to cope with their demands and function effectively in the work environment as a result of the supportive nature of

their families. This could also be linked back to the collectivistic culture of the majority of participants. The majority of participants were African males, which meant that they were from a collectivistic culture, which is inherently supportive. In African culture, children would not typically live with the father; they would be raised by a female member or married members of the extended family.

5.3.4 Single- and dual-parent WFE experience

Hypothesis 4, stating that single parents experience significantly lower levels of WFE than dual parents was accepted. The results showed significant mean differences ($M = 3.82$ for single parents; $M = 3.97$ for dual parents and $F = 2.996$; $p < 0.05$) (see Figure 4.9), and was accepted in line with ANOVA criteria stipulated by Gravetter and Wallnau (2011). These results are in agreement with some of the research emphasising WFE as a positive part of the work–family interface. Since WFE is the opposite of WFC, the expected increased experience of WFC for single parents leads to a decrease in WFE. Based on the underpinning notion that WFE can only be achieved when an individual is present and can transfer learned skills in the receiving domain, single parents will experience less WFE because they have no one with whom to share responsibilities (Baral & Bhargava, 2010).

A proposal is made that through the role accumulation theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), single parents could collect more resources which will allow them to fulfil the demands inherent in their various roles. Supportive organisations could ensure increased WFE by implementing the role accumulation theory and continually creating opportunities for single parents to accumulate more resources. The SANDF could task the multi-professional team (MPT) to develop, present and provide enrichment programmes throughout various units. The MPT consists of various health and wellbeing-related professionals found in the SANDF such as a doctor, social worker, psychologist and chaplain. Dhladhla and Van Dyk (2007, 2009) noted the success that such a team may accomplish towards increasing soldiers' wellbeing.

5.3.5 Single- and dual-parent work satisfaction experience

Hypothesis 5, stating that participating single parents experienced significantly lower levels of work satisfaction than dual parents was rejected. The results showed insignificant mean differences ($M = 4.44$ for single parents; $M = 4.54$ for dual parents

and $F = .233$; $p > 0.05$) (see Fig. 4.10), and Hypothesis 5 was rejected based on ANOVA criteria as stipulated by (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). These results are in contradiction with results found in previous studies.

Narimawati (2007) noted that a single-parent soldier who feels that he or she belongs to the SANDF is likely to experience high levels of motivation, work satisfaction and effectiveness in the organisation. Current results can be supported by the soldier-career fit results reported earlier in the study (see Fig. 4.5). Single parents do not perceive themselves as experiencing low levels of work satisfaction because they perceive fit between themselves and the military. As work satisfaction also reflects career fit, the participating single parents were of the opinion that their present career was suitable for them. The collectivistic nature of the African culture may also be referred to in this instance because it allows single parents to respond to work-related demands unlike single parents from an individualistic culture. The sample consisted of a majority of African men. As per African culture, children are raised by women or married couples. Because of this arrangement, the single parents in the sample did not experience lower work satisfaction because they experienced sufficient support and were able to dedicate their time in the work environment whenever required.

5.4 DISCUSSION OF CORRELATION RESULTS

The strength and direction of relationships between the tested variables will be discussed in this section.

5.4.1 Relationship between stress and work satisfaction

Hypothesis 6, stating that there is a significant relationship between stress and work satisfaction was accepted. The results showed a low but significant negative correlation ($r = -0.22$; $p = 0.00$) (see Fig. 4.11) and were acceptable in accordance with the criteria stipulated (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). These results are in agreement with previous research results, which emphasised the negative relationship between stress and work satisfaction/outcomes. Previous research indicated a negative relationship between stress and work satisfaction (Beckers et al., 2008; Dougherty et al., 2009; Giauque et al., 2012; Hasson & Arnetz, 2006; Wiese & Salmela-Aro, 2008).

Moreau and Mageau (2012) further observed that the majority of individuals who work in highly stressful occupations, such as the military, experienced low levels of work satisfaction. The authors further noted that dissatisfaction was further experienced in the early stages of one's career. In addition to the low levels of work satisfaction, individuals in demanding work contexts experience high levels of psychological difficulties, which are manifested in the form of stress and psychological distress. These results point to a need for the SANDF to develop supportive programmes, which could lessen the effect of stress experienced and thus increase work satisfaction. The MPT could be employed in reaching this goal.

5.4.2 Relationship between social support and stress

Hypothesis 7, stating that there is a significant relationship between social support and stress, was accepted. The results showed a low but significant negative correlation ($r = -0.22$; $p = 0.00$) (see Fig. 4.12) and were acceptable in accordance with the criteria stipulated (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). These results are in agreement with previous results, which emphasised the positive nature of social support. When social support increases in an individual's life, stress – among other challenges – decreases; hence, the negative relationship.

Social support has been proved to protect people from a number of pathological states such as psychological distress (Smith et al., 2013) and life situations such as arthritis, alcoholism, depression and the social breakdown syndrome (Cobb, 1976). The family is the most important source of social support (Shinga, 2015). Such support improves the soldier's wellbeing and further acts as a buffer for military-related challenges (see 2.4.1 and Table 2.3) (Skomorovsky, 2014). Lim and Lee (2011) further emphasise that social support acts as a resource that increases an individual's ability to cope with stress.

5.4.3 Relationship between social support and WFC

Hypothesis 8, stating that there is a significant relationship between social support and WFC, was rejected. The results showed a low but insignificant negative correlation ($r = -0.20$; $p = 0.01$) (see Fig. 4.13) and were rejected in line with the criteria as stipulated (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). These results are contradictory to results found in previous research studies where the negative relationship between social support and WFC was established. Lim and Lee (2011) note that social

support from the family promotes positive workplace outcomes, such as harmony and respect, leading to less conflict experienced in the domains.

Additionally, Goh et al. (2013), Griggs et al. (2013) and Mauno, Ruokolainen and Kinnunen (2015) found that supportive relationships in the form of supervisor support led to reduced WFC. Social support has also been found to have a positive influence on the work–family interface. The more resources (social support) a person has the less such person would experience conflict between work and family demands. The higher the level of social support, the lower the level of WFC.

These results can be drawn back to perception of social support held by participants (see Table 4.1) as well as the experience of social support and WFC between single and dual parents (see Figs. 4.7 and 4.8). No significant differences were found in the experience of social support and WFC between single and dual parents. Combining these results with the largely African and male sample, one can speculate that social support and WFC are concepts that did not have powerful influence on this sample. Building on this, one can further speculate that the level of the two constructs was statistically too small and unclear to indicate an influential relationship.

5.4.4 Relationship between social support and WFE

Hypothesis 9, stating that there is a significant relationship between social support and WFE, was accepted. The results showed a moderate and significant positive correlation ($r = 0.40$; $p = 0.00$) (see Fig. 4.14) and were accepted in line with the stipulated criteria (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). These results are in line with results from previous research, which emphasised the positive and supportive nature of social support. Individuals could attain resources, such as understanding by their supervisor, support in performing family-related duties as well as support from co-workers. Acquisition of the afore-mentioned resources increases an employee's perception of his or her self-efficacy, which explains his or her ability to accomplish work- and family role-related expectations successfully (Ferguson et al., 2012). Taylor et al. (2015) highlight the importance of social support in parenting. Parents who perceive themselves as being adequately supported by their networks become better parents in the process and display higher positive affect towards their children. These results point to a need for the SANDF to implement a MPT who will see to the development and provision of enrichment programmes across various units.

5.4.7 Relationship between social support and work satisfaction

Hypothesis 10, stating that there is a significant relationship between social support and work satisfaction, was rejected. Results showed a negligible and insignificant positive correlation ($r = 0.17$; $p = 0.02$) (see Fig. 4.15) and was rejected based on stipulated criteria (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). These results are contradictory to results found in previous studies, which emphasised the relationship between social support and work satisfaction/outcomes. Halbesleben (2006) as well as Ferguson et al. (2012) purport that when employees receive support from co-workers and significant others, they receive additional resources, which help them balance the demands placed upon them by the life and work domains and ultimately increase their satisfaction in said domains. The contradictory results found in this study may refer back to the profile of the study participants and their perception of social support (see par 5.3.2). A possible reason for the results may be provided by the nature of military culture in these units. Military culture is supportive in nature and is team and group cohesion-orientated (Kirkland & Katz, 1989). Drawing from the explanation of military culture it is assumed that the culture where participants diverts from 'normal' military culture. Soldiers in these units do not experience the support that is expected from units with high levels of cohesion. It can further be assumed that these soldiers work in individualistic units.

5.4.8 Relationship between WFC and work satisfaction

Hypothesis 11, stating that there is a significant relationship between WFC and work satisfaction, was accepted. Results showed a low but significant negative correlation ($r = -0.34$; $p = 0.00$) (see Fig. 4.16) and was acceptable in accordance with the criteria stipulated by (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). The results are in line with results from previous WFC studies, which emphasised the negative influence that conflict between work and family demands has on work-related outcomes.

WFC has been found to have a significant effect on work satisfaction. Porfeli and Mortimer (2010) found that the work satisfaction of individuals depends on their perception of the extent to which work can support their family rather than personal values or goals. Matthews et al. (2014) are of the opinion that it is impossible for WFC to be positively related to work satisfaction. Matthews et al. found that WFC was negatively related to subjective wellbeing indicators. The indicators ranged from

self-assessments of psychological health, satisfaction with work and life domains to affective reactions. These results indicate a need for the SANDF to provide programmes that reduce the effect of WFC on single-parent soldiers. Such programmes are expected to lead to an increase in work satisfaction. The MPT could be utilised to develop and present programmes to the general officers commanding (GOCs) of various formations. If programmes are presented, implemented and accepted at higher levels, implementation at lower levels (unit levels) will be easier.

5.4.9 Relationship between WFE and WFC

Hypothesis 12, stating that there is a significant relationship between WFC and WFE, was accepted. The results showed a low but significant negative correlation ($r = -0.27$; $p = 0.00$) (see Fig. 4.17) and was acceptable according to the criteria stipulated by (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). The results are in line with some of the previous research results, which emphasised the positive nature of WFE and the positive influence it has on the work–family interface. Some researchers have even referred to WFE as the opposite of WFC. Since WFE is the opposite of WFC (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), the expected increased experience of WFE for single parents is expected to lead to reduced WFC.

Noting that single parents do not have a partner with whom to share responsibilities (see 2.2.3), they need to be able to share their resources equally across their various demands. According to the role accumulation theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), single parents could collect more resources, which will allow them to fulfil the demands inherent in their various roles. Supportive organisations could ensure increased WFE by continually creating opportunities for single parents to accumulate more resources and reducing the level of conflict. Garels et al. (2009) highlight that one of the most important roles that WFE plays in individual lives is that it is a buffer against WFC. The availability of WFE ensures that there is a possible harmonious relationship between the demands placed on an individual by his or her family and the demands placed on him or her by work. These results indicate a need for the SANDF to provide enrichment programmes that reduce or buffer the effect of WFC on single-parent soldiers. This can be achieved through utilisation of the MPT.

5.4.10 Relationship between WFE and stress

Hypothesis 13, stating that there is a significant relationship between WFE and stress, was accepted. The results showed a low but significant negative correlation ($r = -0.35$; $p = 0.00$) (see Fig. 4.18) and was accepted based on criteria as stipulated by (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). These results are in line with some of the previous research results which emphasised the positive nature of WFE and how its availability can lead to a reduction of stress experience. The majority of literature explains WFE as a positive construct (Carlson et al., 2011; McNall et al., 2010; Wayne et al., as cited in Akram et al., 2014). As WFE purports that participation in one role enhances performance in another role, it would seem that single-parent participation in the military would enhance their performance in the family and vice versa. Thus high levels of WFE would have a positive influence on single parents and the challenges they come across. These results emphasise the identified need for the SANDF to provide enrichment programmes that reduce or buffer the effect of stress on single-parent soldiers. This can be achieved through utilisation of the MPT.

5.4.11 Relationship between WFE and work satisfaction

Hypothesis 14, stating that there is a significant relationship between WFE and work satisfaction was accepted. The results showed a moderate and significant positive correlation ($r = 0.48$; $p = 0.00$) (see Fig. 4.19) and H13 was acceptable according to the criteria stipulated by (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2011). These results are in line with some of the results from previous studies, which emphasised the positive nature of WFE and the positive influence it has on work satisfaction/outcomes. Wayne et al. (as cited in Akram et al., 2014) established a positive relationship between WFE and job satisfaction, which is a facet of work satisfaction (see par 2.4.2). Corroborating results were also found between WFE and job satisfaction (Carlson et al., 2011). Carlson et al. (2011) further found that, although positive, the relationship between WFE and job satisfaction was stronger in the originating than receiving domain. Similar results were found in a study that evaluated burnout and the work–family interface (Daniel & Sonnentag, 2016; Robinson, Magee & Caputi, 2016). Garels et al. (2009) highlight that one of the most important roles that WFE plays in individual lives is that it is a buffer against WFC. Thus, the availability of WFE ensures that there is a harmonious relationship between the demands placed on an individual by his or her family and the demands placed on him or her by work.

These results indicate a need for the SANDF to provide programmes that promote WFE for single-parent soldiers. Such programmes are expected to lead to an increase in work satisfaction. These programmes can be expected to bear positive results towards countering challenges that the single parents face, such as stress and WFC, due to the positive nature of WFE. The programmes need not only be limited to single parents; they could be presented to dual parents as well as soldiers who are not yet parents as well. This can help prepare them mentally towards becoming military parents. The MPT can be utilised to develop and present programmes to the GOCs of various formations. If programmes are presented, implemented and accepted at higher levels, implementation at lower levels (unit levels) will be easier. Members could be included during the development of programmes in order to increase ownership.

5.5 DISCUSSION OF PARTIAL LEAST SQUARE ANALYSIS RESULTS

PLS analysis was conducted in order to determine the proposed model of work satisfaction for single parents in the SANDF. In an attempt to test the relationship between the variables of interest as proposed in the model (see Fig. 1.1), simultaneous assessment of both the measurement and structural model was conducted. A discussion of the measurement and structural models is provided below after which the overall model results are discussed.

▪ Measurement model analysis

The quality of the measurement model was tested through setting the parameter estimates by means of using the bootstrap technique with intervals set at the 95% level (Medeiros et al., 2007). The bootstrap method also allows for the testing and estimation of path coefficient and estimate levels.

The measures included in the measurement model ensured the determination of valid and reliable constructs for the overall model. Social support consisted of only one dimension, i.e. social support. Social support was thus tested through its items.

Positive and significant results were found for the social support items with estimate values ranging from .61 to .81 (see Table 4.6). Based on the reliability and validity values of the items, reliability and validity were confirmed for the construct of social support.

Stress consisted of only one dimension (i.e. stress). Stress was thus tested through its items. Positive and negative results were found for the stress items. Items PSS4 and PSS8 were found to have very low and insignificant estimate values (i.e. .08 and .11 respectively) (see Table 4.6). Item PSS7 was found to have a low and negative estimate value of -.23 in comparison to other items in the scale. The assumed possible reason for the deviation in values for these items might be ascribed to their negative nature. The three items are negatively worded and must be negatively scored during analysis. Participants might have had difficulty understanding the meaning behind these items and thus did not answer as honestly as possible or might have misinterpreted the questions when responding. All other items in the scale had acceptable and positive estimate values ranging from .36 to .77 (see Table 4.6). Based on the validity and reliability of the remaining seven items, stress was confirmed to be a valid and reliable construct.

Work satisfaction consisted of only one dimension (i.e. work satisfaction). Work satisfaction was thus tested through its items. Positive and significant estimate values were found for all items ranging from .8 to .87 (see Table 4.6). Based on the acceptable reliability and validity values of its items, work satisfaction was confirmed to be a reliable and valid construct. Positive and significant coefficient levels and relatively high estimate values ranging from .65 to .87 (see Table 4.6) were found for all six dimensions measuring WFE. Thus, the reliability and validity were confirmed and accepted for the construct. All six dimensions measuring WFE had positive and significant coefficient levels as well as relatively high estimate values ranging from .57 to .81 (see Table 4.6). Thus, the reliability and validity were confirmed and accepted for the construct.

▪ **Structural model analysis**

The interaction between variables of interest was tested using the PLS structural model analysis. The path coefficient results confirmed that WFC and WFE each had a direct non-mediated effect on work satisfaction (see Table 4.7). Although no direct effect from social support to work satisfaction was established, the path coefficient results revealed that social support had a mediating effect on work satisfaction through WFE (see Table 4.7).

Path coefficient results confirmed that WFE had direct non-mediated effects on stress and WFC (see Table 4.7). These results highlight the positive nature of WFE in the person–environment fit and work–family interface.

No direct effect was found on the path between stress and work satisfaction (see Table 4.7). Such a lack of effect might be attributed to average stress reported in the measures of central tendency (see Table 4.1). Participants only experienced average levels of stress and thus might not have perceived such levels to be significant to their perception/experience of work satisfaction.

No direct effect was found on the path between social support and work satisfaction (see Table 4.7). The lack of effect might be attributed to the mediatory nature of social support that was found between WFE and work satisfaction. According the results, social support only affects work satisfaction when it is incorporated into the WFE process. This is understandable if one considers that the availability of support allows a single parent to transfer and apply learned skills from one environment to another.

No direct effect was found on the path between social support and stress (see Table 4.7). These results are contradictory to the correlations results reported earlier in this thesis (see Fig. 4.12). This can be drawn back to the low AVE found for stress (see Table 4.5). In addition to the low AVE, the stress scale had the lowest composite reliability.

No direct effect was found on the path between social support and WFC. These results are contradictory to the correlation results reported earlier (see Fig. 4.13). This can be linked to the low AVE found for WFC (see Table 4.5).

▪ **Proposed model results**

Through PLS analyses, the present study found that stress ($r^2 = .14$), WFC ($r^2 = .09$), work satisfaction ($r^2 = .32$) and WFE ($r^2 = .16$) had a practical value in the model, with stress explaining 14%, WFC explaining 9%, work satisfaction explaining 32% and WFE explaining 16% of variance of the model fit. The composite reliability (.76 to .96) values were within and above the acceptable threshold and thus accepted for both models (Medeiros et al., 2007). AVE, however, had only four acceptable values (.55 to .71) and one unacceptable value of .37 for both models. Based on the path

coefficients that determine the hypothesised interaction between variables, H7, H8, H10, and H6 were rejected whilst H9, H11, H12, H13 and H14 were accepted.

5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The research results were discussed in this chapter. The chapter commenced with a discussion of descriptive statistics, followed by discussions of ANOVA results and correlation results and ended with a discussion of the PLS results which included the measurement and structural models.

Mentionable and significant results of this study include the effect that independent variables (WFC and WFE) have on the dependent variable (work satisfaction). Social support (independent variable) was found to have a mediatory effect on work satisfaction (dependent variable) through WFE (independent variable). Some of the results coincided with results in literature whilst others were contradictory. Possible reasons were provided for the contradictory results.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to explore factors that influence the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF. The identification of these factors could assist the SANDF in responding appropriately to the increasing number of single parents. The SANDF could be empowered further to create and offer supportive work environments that increase the work satisfaction and commitment of single parents by reducing their concern over the wellbeing of their children. Literature emphasises the importance of family-supportive work environments, supportive leaders/supervisors, co-workers as well as work environments (see Chapter 2). The main objective for this study was to investigate the theoretical and empirical relationships between stress, social support, WFC, WFE and work satisfaction. The theoretical objective was to provide support for exploration of the independent variables (stress, social support, WFC, WFE) and the dependent variable (work satisfaction). The empirical objective was to test the theorised relationships scientifically (see Fig. 1.1).

The significance of this study may be seen in the empirical results. This study makes a significant contribution by exposing factors that influenced the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF. This study highlighted what the organisation as well as its members' needs to do in order to support and cater to the needs of single parents. As the number of single parents in the SANDF is increasing, catering to their needs can be seen as catering to the needs of the organisation. It has been highlighted that individuals with low levels of work satisfaction have the ability to influence the work satisfaction of those around them negatively (see Chapter 2). The research gap identified in literature on whether or not there is a relationship between stress, social support, WFC, WFE and work satisfaction drove the exploration of factors that influence the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF.

Established and reliable questionnaires were employed in this study to test the variables of interest. The questionnaires were found to have acceptable levels of reliability for this study, more particularly for a South African sample. PLS was employed to assess the hypothesised model (relationships) (see Fig. 1.1). The

research results revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between WFC and work satisfaction. A significant positive relationship was further found between WFE and work satisfaction. A significant positive relationship was found between social support and WFE. This relationship revealed two points. Firstly, social support is a moderator between WFE and work satisfaction. Secondly, the provision of social support on its own by the organisation will prove insufficient for the increment of single-parent work satisfaction. Social support has to be provided in combination with necessary skills and knowledge in order for empowerment to occur. The insignificant PLS results for stress and work satisfaction revealed that stress was not an influencing factor for work satisfaction. These results were contradictory to the correlation results found between stress and work satisfaction, which were negative and significant (see Table 4.4).

Insignificant correlation results were found between social support and work satisfaction (see Table 4.4). These results are supported further by the insignificant relationship found between the variables during PLS analysis. The correlation between social support and WFC was found to be insignificant. These results were supported by the insignificant relationship found between social support and WFC during PLS analysis.

ANOVA results indicated that there were mean differences between how single and dual parents experienced all variables of interest (stress, social support, WFC, WFE and work satisfaction). The mean differences for stress, social support, WFC and work satisfaction were found to be insignificant. Only WFE had significant mean differences for single and dual SANDF parents.

Based on the correlation and PLS results found in this study, WFE has been confirmed as a positive construct. This positive nature of WFE was found in literature (see Chapter 2), hypothesised in this study (see Chapter 3) and tested and proved (see Chapter 4). WFE has the ability to influence the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF positively directly and indirectly.

6.2 LIMITATIONS

Exploratory research automatically implies limitations. The exploratory research method only investigated whether or not a relationship existed between identified variables.

The method did not explicitly investigate causal factors nor the presence of extraneous factors, which may unknowingly contribute to the observed relationships. By using this method only, a researcher cannot confidently conclude that relationships exist between identified variables.

The relatively small sample size ($N = 200$) restricts the degree by which these results may be generalised. The sample size further limited the type of statistical analysis which could have been employed and which might have produced more reliable results and allowed for rigorous testing and confirmation of the results.

The sample consisted of a majority of males (72%) against only 28% females. The results cannot be freely generalised to the population as they could be labelled as explaining/representing male work satisfaction rather than single-parent work satisfaction.

The sample consisted of only Engineer Corps units. Participants might be viewed to hold similar perceptions due to their nature of work. Once a person joins the SANDF, their old self is removed through rigorous and consequential training, and replaced by a new identity, which is shared by fellow trainees. Soldiers are taught to talk, act, think and behave in a particular similar manner. In more cases that not, this new identity is guided by goals and objectives of the SANDF in general and the Engineer Corps in particular. Soldiers in the Engineering Corps are trained to think and prioritise in a similar manner. Although the sample consisted of 200 participants, due to their training, it can be said that the researcher only collected data from a homogeneous group. The lack of variety in thinking and lifestyle limited the depth of research as well as the degree to which results can be generalised.

Soldiers in the Engineering Corps are constantly deployed as support for the main force in areas that are far away from their families and are thus required to build supportive relationships with those around them. The fact that the majority of participants were African (see Fig. 4.2) and thus originated from a collectivistic culture is viewed as a limitation in this regard. This, in turn, has an effect on their perception of whether they value or understand social support or not and whether their work satisfaction levels are high or low. The researcher assumed that if the participants did not have supportive networks in place, the study results would have been different.

The majority of participants were first-language Zulu-speakers. This opens a possibility that the participants might have had a limited understanding of the questions that were asked. Furthermore, if there were items with negative connotations, hidden meanings or terms with which participants were unfamiliar, they would probably have responded incorrectly, which thus limits the reliability and validity of their responses and overall degree of generalisability.

Regardless of the limitations stated above, this research still makes a contribution to the work satisfaction literature and its relationship with stress, social support, WFC and WFE. The study highlighted the reliability of the questionnaires in a sample of South African soldiers. Overall, the researcher is of the opinion that this study makes a significant contribution to how the SANDF could cater to the needs of single parents and ensure that it has a combat-ready supply of soldiers at all times.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results (conclusions) and limitations, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

Research into other factors that could possibly influence the work satisfaction of single parents positively in the SANDF could contribute to a broader understanding of the concept. This could ultimately lead the SANDF to promote these positive factors and improve the wellbeing of its members.

It is recommended that similar research be conducted using a sample of single-parent soldiers. The new sample, however, should consist of an equal number of male and female single parents. This will reduce the current concern of results portraying male perceptions instead of single-parent perceptions.

Further research should be conducted to determine the level of work satisfaction across gender. Comparison of males and females will highlight whether support is required for males more than it is for females or whether the same level of support should be provided for both genders.

The present study only consisted of members of the Engineer Corps. A comparison of factors influencing the work satisfaction of single parents across the different groups and arms of service is recommended. Such a study will reveal concerns for single parents across the groups and further reveal whether their work satisfaction levels differ according to the corps. This might influence how the SANDF posts its

members. For example, single parents might be posted in departments that allow for flexible hours while maintaining the organisation's productivity.

Based on these results, the SANDF should focus on reducing WFC for members as it takes away from their work satisfaction. The SANDF should also introduce more forms of social support and skills that may enrich its members and ultimately lead to an increment of their work satisfaction.

The researcher further recommends utilisation of the MPT in various units in order to reduce the challenges found in this study and promote WFE and ultimately increase the work satisfaction of single parents in the SANDF:

- Amstad, Meier, Elfering and Semmer (2011) emphasise that organisations that aim to have healthy and satisfied employees should focus on reducing WFC. It is suggested that the introduction of family-friendly organisations could buffer and reduce the conflict between work and family demands. It should be noted, however, that avoiding WFC should encompass factors that directly affect the organisation and its employees. The effectiveness of family-friendly policies and climates is however limited to the extent that employees deem them relevant (Allen as cited in Amstad et al., 2011; Cook, 2009; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). The organisation needs to support superiors so that employees perceive them as genuinely committed in the effort towards creating family-friendly climates (Crain et al., 2014).
- Baral and Bhargava (2009) emphasise the importance of supervisor support towards WFE. The MPT should develop programmes, which will teach military leaders/commanders how to be more supportive towards subordinates. Supervisor support has the ability to expand the soldier's psychological resource base and increase resources such as confidence and self-efficacy, which could possibly increase satisfaction and performance in the family domain.
- The MPT could also develop programmes, which aim at achieving balance between the employee's family and his or her work. Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) note the importance of work–family balance and its benefits for employees as well as organisations. The authors note that, although it is not an overall solution, work–family balance plays a significant role in employee

health and wellbeing. The authors suggest that the development of programmes should not be driven by the possible reduction of medical cost but by the improvement of employee wellbeing and satisfaction as well as benefits towards the organisation. In an attempt to balance their work and life, soldiers should be allowed to pursue their hobbies. Baquero (2013) noted the importance of investing time in hobbies when attempting to strike a balance between work and life. The MPT could implement child care programs in various units that would allow single parents to pursue their various hobbies without having to worry about their child care duties.

- The integration of a soldier's family within the military to create balance and harmony between the two has been established in the past (Shinga, 2015). Carlson et al. (2006) and Greenhaus and Powell (2006) emphasise the link that an individual perceives between his or her family and work. Building on this, Stoddard and Madsen (2007) highlight the importance of one's family in the WFE process. The authors found that family-to-work enrichment was predictive of a positive relationship in the enrichment process. The inclusion and skills empowerment of a soldier's family will ensure that soldiers learn skills in their family environment, which can be applied in their work environment. This will increase enrichment and lead to an increase in work satisfaction.

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